Sept. 3, 1979

THE NEW YORKER

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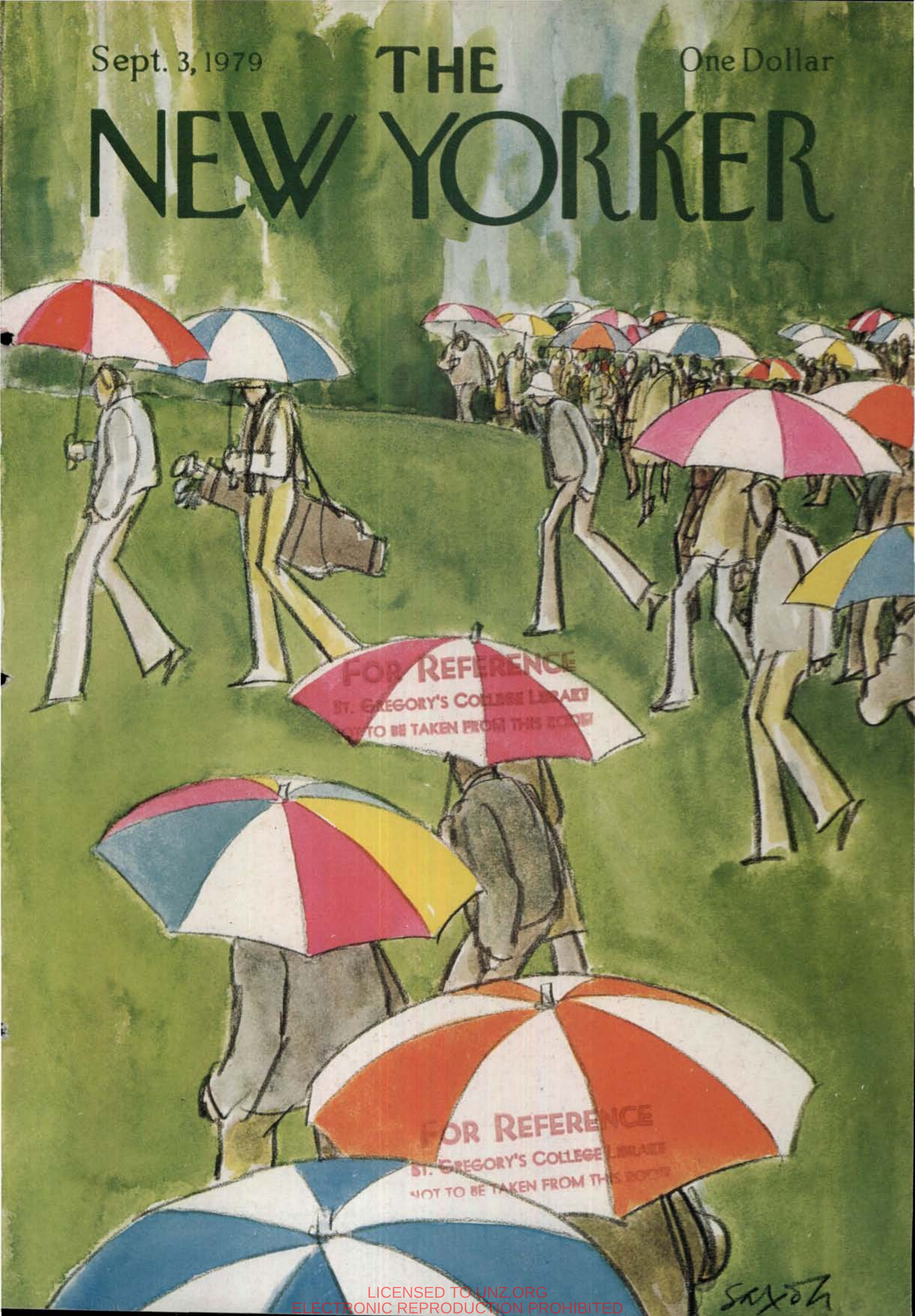

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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THE THEATRE

(Next week, some theatres, as indicated below, will rearrange their schedules because of Labor Day, Sept. 3. There may be further changes, so it would be wise to check with the newspapers before making plans.)

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

Bedroom Farce—A very funny play by Alan Ayckbourn, about four married couples of assorted ages and appetites. With Mildred Natwick, John Lithgow, and Robert Coote. Directed by the author and Peter Hall. (Reviewed in our issue of 4/9/79.) (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 245-3430. Nightly, except Sundays and Tuesday, Sept. 4, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2; special matinée Labor Day at 3.)

Big Bad Burlesque—A musical entertainment conceived and directed by Don Brockett. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 260-8480. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Wednesdays and Sundays at 3.)

Circle Repertory Company—Sam Shepard, a virtuoso among American dramatists, is the author of a comic horror play, BURIED CHILD. The setting is a blighted farm in Illinois, and the performance, under Robert Woodruff's direction, is highly satisfactory. (11/6/78) Wednesdays and Thursdays at 8, and Fridays and Saturdays at 7 and 10:15. . . . ¶ A play by Marty Martin, GERTRUDE STEIN GERTRUDE STEIN GERTRUDE STEIN, with Pat Carroll. Mondays and Tuesdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Sundays at 3. (Circle Repertory Company Theatre, 99 Seventh Ave. S., at Sheridan Sq. 924-7100.)

The Elephant Man—This absorbing play by Bernard Pomerance is based on an actual episode. A freak too repulsive even for display at street fairs finds refuge in a London hospital in Whitechapel from 1886 until his death in 1890. The action covers his progress there and the questions that his progress raises. Jack Hofsiss directed the superior performance; Philip Anglim is the Elephant Man, Kevin Conway is his attending surgeon, and Carole Shelley is the actress Mrs. Kendal. (1/29/79 and 4/30/70) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 246-5969. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Father's Day—Three divorced (and discarded) women invite their ex-husbands to celebrate Father's Day with their children. The trouble with Oliver Hailey's scratchy comedy is just that it is not good enough in any number of ways. One compensation, though, is Graham Beckel's subtle, funny performance as one of the ex-husbands. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 921-9877. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Getting Out—The two heroines of Marsha Norman's affecting and accomplished first play are a young woman who has been released from prison on parole and her younger disruptive, delinquent self. Directed by Jon Jory. (11/6/78) (Theatre de Lys, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Gilda Radner–Live from New York—Two stars of the TV show "Saturday Night Live"—Miss Radner and Don Novello—in a series of funny skits, along with some pleasant singing and dancing. (8/13/79) (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 245-4878. Mondays, except Labor Day, through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Closes Saturday, Sept. 15.)

I Remember Mama—Liv Ullmann is the star of this sentimental chromolithograph of a musical laid in San Francisco in the early nineteen-hundreds. There are a few old-fashioned songs, with music by Richard Rodgers and lyrics by Martin Charnin and Raymond Jessel. The thin book is by Thomas Meehan. (6/11/79) (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 246-0730. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Kid Champion—A revival of Thomas Babe's distinguished play about a rock singer, directed by the playwright. Alan Rosenberg's performance in the title role is more openly emotional than was Christopher Walken's cryptic, haunting Champion, four years ago, but it is strong, all the same. With John Seitz and with Sasha von Scherler, repeating her wonderful characterization of the singer's mother. (Stage One, 120 W. 28th St. 279-4200. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8; Fridays and Saturdays at 7 and 10:30. Closes Sunday, Sept. 9.)

Knockout—Danny Aiello and Edward O'Neill perform splendidly in this not very plausible melodrama about life among the Italian-Americans in Hoboken. The author is Louis La Russo II. (5/14/79) (Helen Hayes, 210 W. 46th St. 246-6380. Nightly, except Sunday through Tuesday, Sept. 2-4, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Light Opera of Manhattan—Through Sunday, Sept. 2: Lehár's THE MERRY WIDOW. . . . ¶ Wednesday through Sunday, Sept. 5-9: Gilbert and Sullivan's H.M.S. PINAFORE. (Eastside, 334 E. 74th St. 861-2288. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8:30. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Saturdays and Sundays at 4.)

Loose Ends—Michael Weller reports on his generation, now in its thirties. As one might expect, its members are getting ahead, as well as along; as one might also expect, this doesn't bring happiness. Roxanne Hart and Kevin Kline play the leads with exceptional grace and strength. (6/18/79) (Circle in the Square, Broadway at 50th St. 581-0720. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Peter Pan—Sandy Duncan has the title role and George Rose is Captain Hook in a revival of the musical with lyrics by Carolyn Leigh, music by Mark Charlap (additional lyrics by Betty Comden and Adolph Green, and additional music by Jule Styne). Directed by Rob Iscove. Previews through Wednesday, Sept. 5. Opens officially on Thursday, Sept. 6. (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 586-5555.

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THE NEW YORKER
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THE NEW YORKER (ISSN 0028-792X), published weekly by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc., 25 W. 43rd St., N.Y., N.Y. 10036; Peter F. Fleischmann, chairman; George J. Green, president; William P. Buxton, Milton Greenstein, and Sam R. Spoto, vice-presidents; J. Kennard Bosee, treasurer; Elaine M. Matteo, secretary. Branch advertising offices: 111 East Wacker Drive, Chicago, Ill. 60601; 155 Montgomery St., San Francisco, Calif. 94104; 523 West Sixth St., Los Angeles, Calif. 90014; 1175 Peachtree St. N. E., Atlanta, Ga. 30361; 8 Arlington St., Boston, Mass. 02116; 21 Grosvenor St., London, W1X OED. Vol. LV, No. 29, September 3, 1979. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. Authorized as second-class mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa, Canada, and for payment of postage in cash. © 1979 by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc., in the United States and Canada. All rights reserved. No part of this periodical may be reproduced without the consent of The New Yorker. Printed in U.S.A. Subscription rates: In U.S. and possessions, one year, $24.00; two years, $40.00. In Canada and Mexico, one year, $28.00. Other foreign, $32.00.
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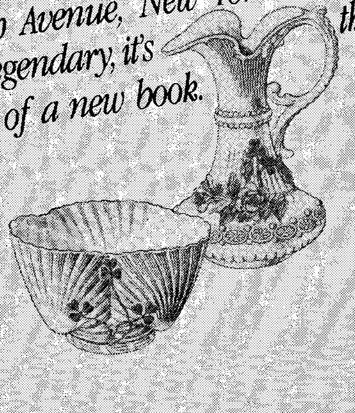

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8; opening-night curtain at 6:15. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

The Price—This revival of Arthur Miller's play, which has moved from Off Broadway to Broadway, is better than the original 1968 production. Fritz Weaver, Joseph Buloff, Mitchell Ryan, and Scotty Bloch are the distinguished performers; John Stix directed. (4/30/79) (Playhouse, 359 W. 48th St. 541-9820. Tuesdays, except Sept. 4, through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:30, and Sundays at 3; special matinée Labor Day at 3.)

Say Goodnight, Gracie—Ralph Pape's funny comedy about the sadness of three young men who are facing their high-school reunion—a sadness that is hardly dispelled by the young women whom two of them live with, or by the quantities of pot that all of them smoke. The performance, under Austin Pendleton's skillful direction, is superior. (4/2/79) (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S., at Sheridan Sq. 691-6226. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8, and Fridays and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Scrambled Feet—The cheerfulness and occasional ingenuity of this little revue about life in the theatre sporadically compensate for its lack of wit, but not often. (Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 982-9292. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Spell #7—Ntozake Shange's new show—a mosaic of screens and recitations and music and dancing, set in a bar frequented by black actors and actresses—is a spellbinder indeed. The performances, under Oz Scott's direction, are very good; those of Mary Alice, Reyno, La Tanya Richardson, and Larry Marshall are even better than that. (7/16/79) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Strider: The Story of a Horse—The recollections of a piebald gelding. The show, a musical adaptation of a short story by Tolstoy, has been dramatized (after a fashion) by Mark Rozovsky, and, needless to say, the gelding, as performed by Gerald Hiken, embodies any number of Tolstoy's ideas on any number of matters. Most of the actors, who do well, double as horses and people, and the results are sometimes effective, sometimes humorous, and often painfully cute. The music (originally composed by Mr. Rozovsky and S. Vetkin and arranged by Norman L. Berman) is consistently delightful. Robert Kalfin was both co-translator and co-director. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Wednesday through Friday, Aug. 29-31, at 7, and Saturday, Sept. 1, at 7 and 10. Thereafter, nightly, except Mondays, at 8; matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Sundays at 5.)

Sweeney Todd—A mass murderer in nineteenth-century London is the peculiar protagonist of this boisterous musical, to which Stephen Sondheim has contributed something like twenty-five songs. With Len Cariou as the murderer and Angela Lansbury as his contented accomplice. Harold Prince directed. (3/12/79) (Uris, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

They're Playing Our Song—A two-speed musical with Robert Klein and Lucie Arnaz, in the course of which two nearly mindless young people meet and bicker. Neil Simon is the author of the book, Marvin Hamlisch wrote the music, and the lyrics are by Carole Bayer Sager. (2/26/79) (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 265-4311. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Whose Life Is It Anyway?—A brilliant performance by Tom Conti in a play by Brian Clark about a young man who believes he has the right to choose death over life. A grim-sounding topic, but the playwright has invested it with humor and warmth. (4/30/79) (Trafalgar, 208 W. 41st St. 921-8000. Nightly, except Sundays and Labor Day, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2; special matinée Labor Day at 3.)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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Long Runs—**Ain't Misbehavin'**: A well-nigh perfect show based on the performing career of Fats Waller. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 730-1760. Nightly, except Sundays and Labor Day, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2; special matinée Labor Day at 3.) . . . **Annie**: A long musical derived from the celebrated comic-strip characters Little Orphan Annie and Daddy Warbucks. (Alvin, 250 W. 52nd St. 757-8646. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas**: A cheerful, cheering, and foolish musical about a bordello called the Chicken Ranch. Tommy Tune was the choreographer, Carol Hall wrote the score, and Larry L. King and Peter Masterson wrote the libretto. (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 246-0246. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **Chapter Two**: A comedy by Neil Simon, less funny than most of its predecessors. Laurence Luckinbill plays a miserable widower who suddenly finds a new love and doesn't know what to do with her, except to marry her and make her as miserable as he has been. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Nightly, except Sundays, Labor Day, and Thursday, Sept. 6, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2; special matinée Labor Day at 3.) . . . **A Chorus Line**: A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 246-5990. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **Da**: In Hugh Leonard's entertaining play, a dramatist, back in Ireland for the funeral of his father, is persistently haunted by the stubborn, funny corpse. David Leary is the dramatist, and Brian Keith his late Da. (Morosco, 217 W. 45th St. 246-6230. Nightly, except Sundays and Labor Day, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2; special matinée Labor Day at 3.) . . . **Dancin'**: Superb young dancers (who can also sing) carry out the witty and sexy notions of the great show-biz choreographer Bob Fosse. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 247-0472. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **Deathtrap**: A thriller almost as clever as "Sleuth." The author is Ira Levin, and the star is John Cullum. (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 246-4636. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **Dracula**: Jean LeClerc costars with Edward Gorey's sets and costumes in this highly entertaining revival of a twenties melodrama. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-6363. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **Eubie!**: A captivating old-fashioned revue, with lots of new-fashioned dancing and singing. The music is culled from the lifework of Eubie Blake, still merrily among us at ninety-six. (Ambassador, 215 W. 49th St. 541-6490. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **The Fantasticks**: 8,040 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **Gemini**: In Albert Innaurato's delightful comedy, a Harvard undergraduate, son of an Italian-American laborer, is paid a surprise visit by a pair of his classmates—a well-to-do brother and sister from Cambridge—and is thrown into a panic that at first appears to be social but is actually sexual. (Little Theatre, 240 W. 44th St. 221-6425. Nightly, except Sundays and Tuesday, Sept. 4, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2; special matinée Labor Day at 3.) . . . **Grease**: A musical that parodies, by faithful imitation, the songs and dances of the nineteen-fifties. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 245-5760. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **I'm Getting My Act Together and Taking It on the Road**: A night-club singer with strong feminist views celebrates her thirty-ninth birthday by auditioning her new act for her dismayed manager. This somewhat disappointing musical by Nancy Ford (score) and Gretchen Cryer (book and lyrics) was directed by Word Baker. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **Mummenschanz**: A merry evening of pantomime with three masked players. The masks are ingenious and surprising and so are the ideas of this nimble troupe. (Bijou, 209 W. 45th St. 221-8500. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3; special matinée Labor Day at 3.) . . . **Oh! Calcutta!**: A collection of short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 757-7164. Mondays through Wednesdays, and Fridays, at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinée Wednesday, Aug. 29, at 2.) . . . **Vanities**: In three acts, three Southern high-school girl cheerleaders change from all but identical "best friends" (1963) into quite different and incompatible New Yorkers (1974), in this amusing and gently ironic comedy by Jack Heifner. (Downstairs at the Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays, except Sept. 4, through Saturdays at 8:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3; special matinée Labor Day at 3.)

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Beatlemania—A multimedia and live-music program about the sixties, with four musicians doing thirty-seven songs written by John Lennon and Paul McCartney. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 757-2626. Tuesdays, except Sept. 4, through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3; special matinée Labor Day at 3.)

DANCE

American Ballet Theatre—Opening performances of a two-week engagement that will run through Sunday, Sept. 16—Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, Sept. 4-5: "Giselle." . . . ¶ Thursday evening, Sept. 6: "Firebird," "Voluntaries," "Pas de Deux," and "Theme and Variations." . . . ¶ Friday evening, Sept. 7: "Theme and Variations," "Pas de Deux," "Voluntaries," and "Firebird." . . . ¶ Saturday evening, Sept. 8, and Sunday matinée and evening, Sept. 9: "Swan Lake." (Metropolitan Opera House. 580-9830. Evenings at 8. Matinées at 2.)

Pearl Primus—Miss Primus, solo or with her company, performing dances of Africa, the Caribbean, and the United States. Miss Primus solos in "Unique Presentation of the Dances" Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8, and in "Inner Being of African Sculpture" on Wednesdays at 3. . . . ¶ The company of

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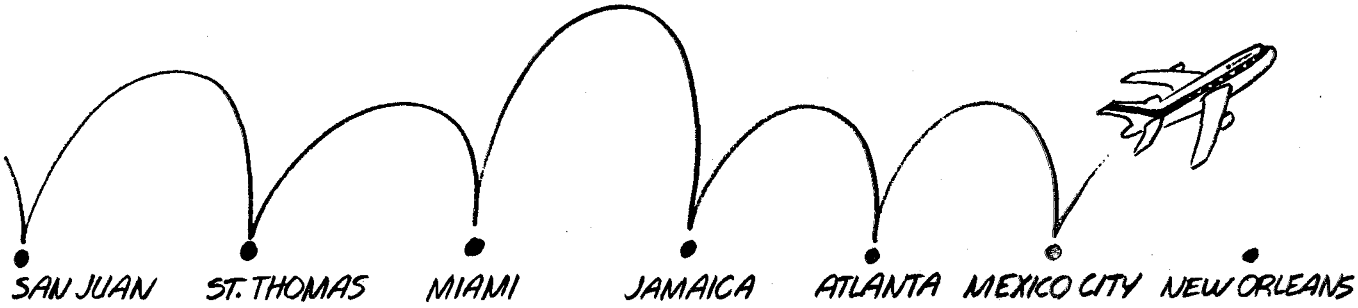

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*Effective Nov. 1, 1979 †Effective Dec. 1, 1979

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EASTERN
WE HAVE TO EARN OUR WINGS EVERY DAY.™

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8

twelve, including Percival Borde, performs "Earth Theatre" on Fridays at 8 and Saturdays and Sundays at 3 and 8. (Perry Street Theatre, 31 Perry St. 255-7190.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Beefsteak Charlie's, 55 Fifth Ave., at 12th St. (675-7812)—A dark lounge and bar with a conscientious music policy. **JIMMY PONDER,** a good jazz guitarist who started out playing rhythm and blues, will lead his trio on Friday and Saturday, Aug. 31-Sept. 1; and on Friday and Saturday, Sept. 7-8, saxophonist Zbigniew Namyslovski will head up a quartet. Other combos round out the schedule. Music Wednesdays and Thursdays at nine and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at ten-thirty and twelve-thirty. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A four-hundred-and-fifty-seat club that shrewdly books jazz, new-wave, country, blues, and, above all, rock bands. Walter Egan, a rock singer from Los Angeles, shares the stage with Blackjack, a rock band, on Wednesday and Thursday, Aug. 29-30; on Friday and Saturday, Aug. 31-Sept. 1, baritone and soprano saxophonist **GERRY MULLIGAN** and his combo will trade sets with electric jazz-rock violinist **MICHAL URBANIAK,** his vocalist wife **URSZULA DUDZIAK,** and their quintet; Tuesday through Thursday, Sept. 4-6, Irish blues and rock singer Rory Gallagher will be here; and Friday and Saturday, Sept. 7-8, will be claimed by the Records, a British rock group. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine and midnight. Dining.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—It seems as though Bradley's is everybody's favorite neighborhood bar, even people who don't live in the neighborhood. Pianist **TOMMY FLANAGAN** and bassist **RED MITCHELL** work together through Saturday, Sept. 1; beginning Monday, Sept. 3, West Coast pianist **LOU LEVY** and bassist **RUFUS REID** will spend a week here. Sundays are the domain of pianist Joe Derise. Music from nine-thirty. Dining.

Cachaça, 403 E. 62nd St. (688-8501)—Nightly homage to Brazil's Tin Pan Alley, which with composers like Jobim, Bonfa, Gil, and Gilberto, is more like a *rua d'ouro.* The room is chic and urbane, cleverly done up with mirrors, plants, and subtle lighting—it all somehow suggests a nighttime view of Rio. A capable trio and a singer perform bossa nova and other sambas from eleven; before and between sets, there is recorded American and Brazilian disco music and Carnaval music. The club is open nightly, except Mondays, from eight to four. Dining and dancing.

Café Carlyle, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—**MARIAN MCPARTLAND,** who has taken over the piano on the stage for the summer, performs at nine-forty-five and eleven-forty-five through Thursday, Aug. 30; and beginning Tuesday, Sept. 4, she will do her two shows on a Tuesday-through-Saturday schedule. Dining. Closed on Sundays and Mondays.

Carnegie Tavern, 165 W. 56th St. (757-9522)—Pianist **ADAM MAKOWICZ** performs here through Saturday, Sept. 1; on Tuesday, Sept. 4, pianist **ELLIS LARKINS** will return from his summer leave. Music nightly, except Sundays, from eight until midnight. Dining.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. 982-4052)—A pioneer new-wave (formerly punk) rock club, and still one of the most important outlets. The bands: Destroy All Monsters, Tuf Blu, and Cigarettes Wednesday, Aug. 29; the Rudies and the Proof Thursday, Aug. 30; Bloodless Pharaohs, Colors, Neighbors, and Allies Friday, Aug. 31; Bloodless Pharaohs, Colors, Decks, Sick, and Kids Saturday, Sept. 1; and Editors and Decks Sunday, Sept. 2. Nightly, from nine-thirty. Monday is showcase night.

City Limits, Seventh Ave. S. at 10th St. (243-2242)—A large corner club with a past—it has been known as Nick's, Your Father's Mustache, and Alfredo's Settebello. It is now a country-and-Western hangout, though one needn't arrive in a pickup truck in order to be admitted. Various lively, well-miked bands are booked to play here for listening and dancing nightly, after ten.

The Conservatory, in the Mayflower Hotel, Central Park W. at 61st St. (265-0060)—This redesigned corner bar has brought in singer and pianist **RONNY WHYTE,** who works with bassist **JACK SIX** Tuesdays through Saturdays from eight-thirty to one.

Cookery, 21 University Pl., at 8th St. (674-4450)—The summer entertainment is **LARRY ADLER,** who seems as proud of his Wimbledon entrée (he has been granted a lifetime seat) as he is of the hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of the harmonica, his favorite instrument. Mr. Adler, his mouth organ, and pianist Hal Schaefer are in evidence Tuesdays through Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven. Sundays and Mondays belong to pianist **SAMMY PRICE,** who performs at eight-thirty and ten-thirty. Dining.

Eddie Condon's, 144 W. 54th St. (265-8277)—A traditional-jazz sextet plays every night but Sunday from nine-thirty. On Sunday, Sept. 2, trumpeter **WARREN VACHÉ** will lead a quintet that will begin playing at eight-thirty. Dining.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—The entrance comprises a green-tinted Plexiglas door that leads to a very narrow hallway with corrugated-metal walls, a line of narrow mirrors, and a floor that looks like the embossed-metal kind built for battleships. A perfect setting for an early-sixties French film. Downstairs, where the jazz is, in a comfortable-verging-on-plush room, trumpeter and composer **WOODY SHAW** and his quintet finish up on Saturday, Sept. 1; Tuesday through Saturday, Sept. 4-8, have been set aside for **SONNY FORTUNE,** a driving, hard-edged alto saxophonist, and his group. Sets begin at nine-thirty. Tuesdays through Saturdays. Dining.

Gregory's, 1149 First Ave., at 63rd St. (371-2220)—On Mondays guitarist **ATTILA ZOLLER** collaborates with pianist **DON FRIEDMAN** and bassist **HARVIE SWARTZ;** on Tuesdays, guitarist **CHUCK WAYNE** leads a trio; and Wednesdays through Sundays, guitarist **JOE PUMA** usually holds down the fort with bassist **FRANK LUTHER,** pianist **HOD O'BRIEN,** and vocalist Alicia Sherman. All these groups play from ten, except on Sunday, when they start at nine. On Sundays, O'Brien and Sherman begin at seven. Nightly, except Sundays, from seven to ten, pianist Loumell Morgan and bassist Morris Edwards team up on the tiny bandstand.

Hors d'Oeuvrerie, at Windows on the World, 107th Floor, 1 World Trade Center. (938-1111)—On a clear day, you can see Jersey City. Singer and pianist **NINA SHELDON** and her trio play for listening and dancing Tuesdays through Saturdays from seven-thirty to twelve-thirty. Pianist Joe Albany alternates with the trio after nine-thirty.

Hurrah, 36 W. 62nd St. (541-4909)—A big second-floor loft space with live and taped new-wave and old-wave rock, and dancing to both. The club, which has been closed for vacation, will reopen on Wednesday, Sept. 5, with James White and the Contortions slated to perform. Live music after eleven; taped music from nine.

Jazzmania Society, 14 E. 23rd St., on the fourth floor. (477-3077)—A carpeted jazz loft with a living-room atmosphere: One just stretches out while the musicians perform on the bandstand. Various jazz players turn up to jam Fridays through Sundays from nine. Soft drinks and snacks.

Jimmy Ryan's, 154 W. 54th St. (664-9700)—**ROY ELDRIDGE,** the house legend, is propelled by a willing Dixieland quintet Tuesdays through Saturdays. On Mondays, **MAX KAMINSKY** leads the group. Music weeknights from nine-thirty to three. On Sundays, Kaminsky directs another group of musical archivists from eight until two.

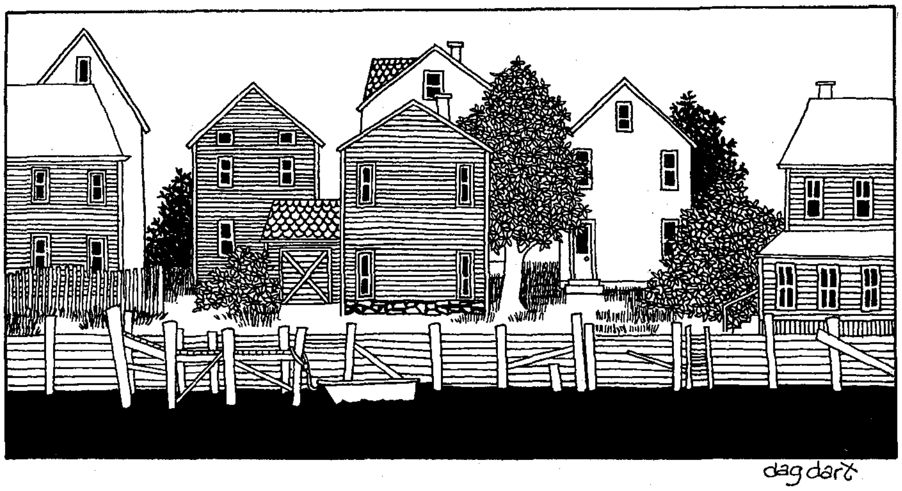
Knickerbocker Saloon, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A pleasant corner restaurant, bar, and piano-bass depot. Pianist **JUNIOR MANCE** and his bassist **MARTY RIVERA** are on hand Tuesdays through Saturdays. Music from ten. Dining.

Lone Star Café, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—Texas is a place where women are women and men wear Bermuda shorts all summer; the Lone Star is an authentic (despite its Yankee locale) Texas hangout. The music is usually good, solid blues, rock, or country, and runs from about nine-fifteen until three; on Sundays from eight-thirty to two. On Thursday, Aug. 30, Country Joe and the Fish, a recently reunited sixties folk-rock band, will be onstage. Dining.

Marty's, 1265 Third Ave., at 73rd St. (249-4100)—A dark, clubby-looking room, with heavy furniture, chandeliers, and a picture-window view of a garden. **JACKIE CAIN** and **ROY KRAL,** one of the most highly lauded and most popular vocal teams in jazz, wind up their stay on Saturday, Sept. 1; on Tuesday, Sept. 4, **HELEN WARD,** who sang with Benny Goodman's band in the thirties, will come in. Mondays through Thursdays at nine and eleven; Fridays at ten and midnight; and Saturdays at ten-thirty and midnight. Dining.

Max's Kansas City, 213 Park Ave. S., at 17th St. (777-7870)—Crowded in the sixties, crowded in the seventies, and it will probably be crowded in the eighties. The lineup: on Wednesday, Aug. 29, Blessed and Stimulators; Thursday, Aug. 30, Neon Leon's Rock and Roll Circus and the Boyfriends; Friday, Aug. 31, Rattlers and Voodoo Shoes; Saturday, Sept. 1, Victims and Kongress; Sunday, Sept. 2, Brenda Bergman & the Realtones, Get Wet, and Marilyn; Monday, Sept. 3, Nu Clear Energy, the Superdude Party, the Maxx, and a film; and Tuesday, Sept. 4, Wild & Trendy Few, the Tickets, and the Next. Music after ten-thirty.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—Cornettist **DICK SUDHALTER,** singer **BARBARA LEA,** pianist **BOB DOROUGH,** and drummer **BUTCH**



MILES are currently paying tribute to composer Hoagy Carmichael. Music Tuesdays through Saturdays from nine-fifteen. On most Mondays, from nine-thirty to midnight, Woody Allen comes and goes. Dining. Closed Sundays.

MIKELL'S, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—A little neighborhood place that brings in jazz, blues, funk, and disco musicians. Trumpeter Hugh Masekela will be leading his quintet Thursday through Saturday, Aug. 30-Sept. 1. Music from about ten until two. Dining.

ONE FIFTH AVENUE, Fifth Ave. at 8th St. (260-3434)—A trendy downtown haunt with good music in the cocktail lounge-clam bar. AL HAIG, one of the earliest and still one of the best bop pianists, works with a bassist every night except Monday and Friday from nine-thirty to one-thirty. Mondays and Fridays are claimed by the Downtown Blues Blowers, a traditional-jazz sextet that features drummer FREDDIE MOORE, who worked with King Oliver a season or two ago and who is about to pounce on his eighty-first year. Dining.

OTHER END, 149 Bleecker St. (673-7030)—Veteran folkies RAMBLIN' JACK ELLIOTT and BOB GIBSON are here Wednesday, Aug. 29; Thursday through Saturday, Aug. 30-Sept. 1, rock singer Jimmie Mack will be onstage with his band; and on Wednesday, Sept. 5, singer Esther Satterfield will begin a four-night stint. Shows most nights at nine and eleven-thirty, on Fridays and Saturdays at nine and midnight.

RAINBOW ROOM, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (757-9090)—Lots of tourists, a few sagacious natives, and a dance band—the Russ Morgan orchestra—populate this room. Music Tuesdays through Thursdays from seven to one, Fridays and Saturdays from eight to two, and Sundays from six to midnight. Dining.

RENO SWEENEY, 126 W. 13th St. (691-0900)—The black-and-white-tiled stage of this famous seventies cabaret is claimed Thursdays through Saturdays by Barbara Cook, who sings at nine and eleven-thirty. Anne Marie Moss sings here on Wednesday, Aug. 29, at nine and eleven-thirty; and on Tuesday and Wednesday, Sept. 4-5, singer Karen Akers will do two shows a night. Dining.

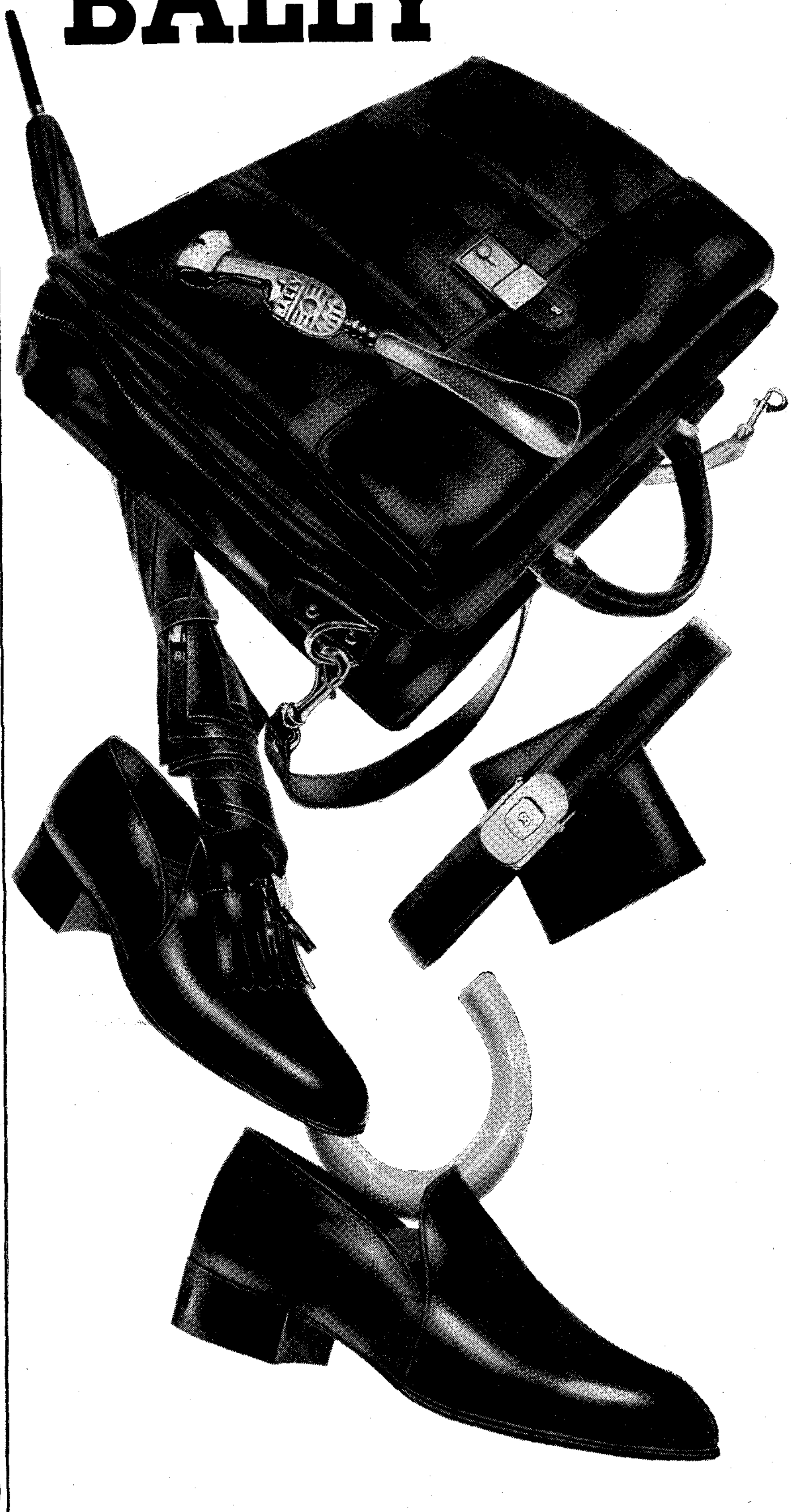
SEVENTH AVENUE SOUTH, 21 Seventh Ave. S., at Leroy St. (242-4694)—A light, airy second-floor jazz club, in which most of the walls are refreshingly uncluttered. Saxophonist RONNIE CUBER leads a quintet featuring trumpeter TOM HARRELL on Wednesday, Aug. 29; Thursday through Saturday, Aug. 30-Sept. 1, will belong to the 24th Street Band, a jazz-funk quartet; and starting Thursday, Sept. 6, trumpeter and proprietor RANDY BRECKER will head up a quintet. Music from ten to two nightly. Dining. Closed Sunday through Wednesday, Sept. 2-5.

SHERATON CENTRE, Seventh Ave. at 52nd St. (581-1000)—In a lounge called the French Quarter, one will find Jazz à Cordes, a quintet that revives hot jazz from the thirties, through Saturday, Sept. 1. On Monday, Sept. 3, THE WORLD'S GREATEST JAZZ BAND OF YANK LAWSON AND BOB HAGGART will move in. Music after nine nightly, except Sundays.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Two BARRON brothers—tenor saxophonist BILL and pianist KENNY—along with drummer BEN RILEY and bassist BUSTER WILLIAMS work together through Saturday, Sept. 1. On Sunday and Monday, Sept. 2-3, drummer BEAVER HARRIS will perform with his quintet; and on Tuesday, Sept. 4, pianist Mike Nock will lead a quartet. Shows from about ten. Dining.

TIN PALACE, 325 Bowery, at 2nd St. (674-9115)—A relaxed, informal musicians' and listeners' hangout with a fine out-there and in-there lineup. Four outstanding players—alto saxophonist ARTHUR BLYTHE, pianist STANLEY COWELL, drummer STEVE MCCALL, and bassist FRED HOPKINS—will be working as a unit here through Sunday, Sept. 2. On Monday, Sept. 3, alto saxophonist MONTY WATERS will be joined by pianist JAKI BYARD and bassist REGGIE WORKMAN; Tuesday through Thursday, Sept. 4-6, will see the PHAROAH SANDERS quartet on the bandstand; and on Friday, Sept. 7, JOHN ORE, TOMMY TURRENTINE, SHIRLEY SCOTT, C-SHARPE, and KENNY SHURLAND will move in for three nights. Music every night after ten. Dining.

TRAMPS, 125 E. 15th St., at Irving Pl. (777-5077)—This recently remodelled club is late-



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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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ly bringing in a lot of blues players. Willie Guy Rainey, a blues singer in his seventies, will be onstage through Saturday, Sept. 1; on Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 5-6, **LOUISIANA RED**, who sings distraught-sounding rural blues, will perform with his band; and on Friday and Saturday, Sept. 7-8, the Robert Ross blues band, a local group, will be present. Shows at nine and eleven Sundays through Thursdays; at nine, eleven, and one on Fridays and Saturdays. Dining and dancing.

TRAX, 100 W. 72nd St., near Columbus Ave. (799-1448)—This place is primarily a showcase for unestablished rock bands, but sometimes established performers make their way onto the stage, too. The understated entrance is easy to miss. Music usually after eleven. Closed Sundays. Dining.

VILLAGE GATE, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—In the large downstairs room, **DIZZY GILLESPIE**, the master, will lead his quintet opposite drummer **ART BLAKEY** and his 1979 **JAZZ MESSENGERS**. Shows nightly, except Mondays, at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty. Jazz harpist **DAPHNE HELLMAN** and her trio work in the sidewalk lounge on Tuesdays from nine.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Tenor saxophonist **WARNE MARSH** is in the midst of a very rare New York club appearance, and he'll be here with a quartet through Sunday, Sept. 2; on Tuesday, Sept. 4, pianist **BILL EVANS** will take over with his trio. Mondays are **MEL LEWIS** big-band nights. Music from ten.

WEST BOONDOCK, 114 Tenth Ave., at 17th St. (929-9645)—Most of the patrons of this comfortable bar and soul-food restaurant make a special point of coming—they don't just stroll by and decide to drop in. After all, this isn't a Village club, which thrives on a casual passerby clientele; this is a dark, gloomy, out-of-the-way (unless one is a trucker or in the slaughterhouse business) corner. Mondays through Wednesdays are claimed by pianist Esther Blue; Thursdays through Sundays are turned over to Sadik Hakim. Music from eight to two.

WEST END, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—Columbia's off-campus survey of swing music. Saxophonist **RUSSELL PROCOPE** and his Ellington-minded quartet, which is called Ellingtonia, perform through Friday, Aug. 31; and on Saturday, Sept. 1, tenor saxophonist George Kelly and his Jazz Sultans will come in for a nine-day visit. Things get under way about nine. Student food at student prices.

JAZZ/FOLK/ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

TIM CURRY—Palladium, 126 E. 14th St. Friday, Aug. 31, at 8. For information about tickets, call 977-9020.

SALSA FESTIVAL—A two-day event. Saturday, Sept. 1, at 8: Hector Cassanova, Celia Cruz, Johnny Pacheco, and others. . . . ¶ Sunday, Sept. 2, at 8: Miss Cruz, Ray Barretto, Willie Colon, and others. (Madison Square Garden, Eighth Ave. between 31st and 33rd Sts. 564-4400.)

LIZA MINNELLI—Carnegie Hall. 247-7459. Tuesday, Sept. 4, through Friday, Sept. 14. Nightly at 8.)

GRATEFUL DEAD—Madison Square Garden. Tuesday through Thursday, Sept. 4-6, at 7:30.

ELLA FITZGERALD—Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 246-4600. Thursday, Sept. 6, at 8.

BEE GEES—With Sweet Inspirations. (Madison Square Garden. Friday through Sunday, Sept. 7-9, and Tuesday and Wednesday, Sept. 11-12, at 8.)

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Mondays through Fridays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6. They will be closed Labor Day.)

GALLERIES

LYONEL FEININGER (*1871-1956*)—*This artist's* distinctive, incisive line is seen at its best in the thirty drawings and watercolors in this exhibit, and especially in his portrayal of yachts gliding along in the distance under a towering Cubist arrangement of sail. Through Sept. *29*. (Sabarsky, *987* Madison Ave., at 77th St. Opens Tuesdays through Saturdays at 1.)

DON GUMMER—A six-sided painted-wood sculpture. Through Sept. 23. (Castle Clinton, Battery Park. Open daily until 4:30.)

MARY PETTY (1899-1976)—Twenty-six watercolors that became *New Yorker* covers and were bequeathed by the artist to Syracuse University. Through Sept. 28. (Lubin House, 11 E. 61st St.)

ITALIAN RENAISSANCE PAINTINGS FROM THE HERMITAGE—A show of eleven paintings from the period, including Leonardo da Vinci's "Madonna and Child" ("Benois Madonna"), and works by Correggio and Titian. Through Sept. 30. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. Open daily.)

U.S. CUSTOM HOUSE—A sixteen-foot painted-muslin ceremonial tepee, mounted on a platform in the rotunda here, is the focal point of a show of crafts selected from the collections of the Museum of the American Indian. In addition, ethnographic films are shown daily. Through Oct. 31. (Bowling Green at the foot of Broadway. Weekdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

GROUP SHOWS—At the **ACQUAVELLA**, 18 E. 79th St.: A scallop shell eight feet tall, made of laminated mahogany, a lifelike marble robe hanging on a rack, and a gigantic mahogany bug, all by Peter Robbie, dominate this show, which also offers large oils that look like abstract needlepoint by Mark Schlesinger, and colorful abstract collages on rice paper by Catharine Warren. Through Friday, Aug. 31. . . . **ASSOCIATED AMERICAN ARTISTS**, 663 Fifth Ave., at 53rd St.: Nineteenth- and twentieth-century etchings, lithographs, and woodcuts on the theme of musical instruments, including Lyonel Feininger's "Virtuoso" and Jim Dine's "Cellist." Through Saturday, Sept. 8. . . . **CRISPO**, 41 E. 57th St.: William Merritt Chase's "The Kimono" (1895), Georgia O'Keeffe's "Yellow Calla Lily" (1927), and Richard Pousette-Dart's "Untitled (Presence)" (1974) are three of the paintings in a show of works by Americans. Through Sept. 15. (Mondays through Fridays, 11:30 to 4:30.) . . . **DROLL-KOLBERT**, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.: A summery exhibition of paintings and constructions, including a screen painted with a panorama of Martha's Vineyard by Susan Crile; pastels with American Indian motifs by a New Mexico artist named Jane Quick-to-See Smith; and a colored-pencil drawing incorporating figures taken from Matisse and Picasso by Jane Kaplowitz. Through Friday, Aug. 31. (Tuesdays through Fridays, 11 to 4.) . . . **SEAPORT GALLERY**, 215 Water St.: A show of cityscapes, in prints and photographs, from the twenties and thirties, by Louis Lozowick, Berenice Abbott, Max Weber, and others. Through Sept. 30. (Wednesdays through Sundays, and Labor Day, 11 to 6.) . . . **WASHBURN**, 42 E. 57th St.: Paintings, drawings, and sculptures produced by Americans in the forties. The artists include Mary Callery, Alice Trumbull Mason, and Charles Shaw. Through Friday, Aug. 31.

PHOTOGRAPHY

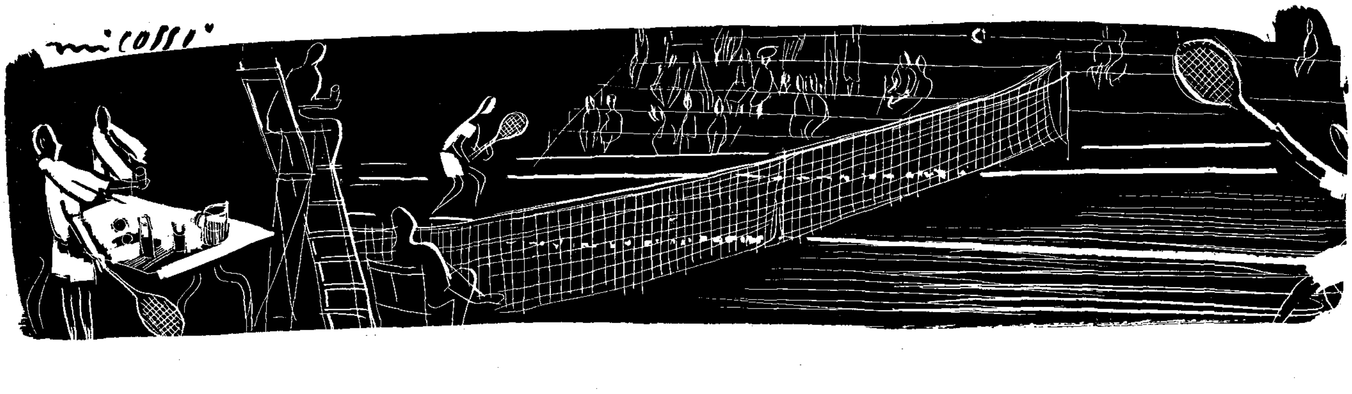
LARRY FINK—The Museum of Modern Art has a show of his black-and-white photographs of social gatherings in New York City and rural Pennsylvania. See below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

GROUP SHOWS—At the **BROOKLYN MUSEUM**, Eastern Parkway: More than a hundred photographs from the museum's collection—Abbott, Erwitt, Hine, Genthe, Weston, and others. Through Monday, Sept. 3. (Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.) . . . **FRENCH EMBASSY**, 972 Fifth Ave., at 78th St.: "Six Looks" is the title of an exhibit of photographs of the Paris cultural center Beaubourg, by Robert Doisneau, Martine Franck, Marc Riboud, and three others. Through Friday, Aug. 31. . . . **INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY**, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St.: A historical survey (1839 to the present) of Polish photography. Through Sept. 15. (Daily, except Mondays, 11 to 5.) . . . **SEAGRAM BUILDING**, 375 Park Ave., at 52nd St. (fourth floor): Thirty-seven photographs, including Steichen's "Sunday Night on 40th Street" and Ben Shahn's "Linworth, Ohio." Through Friday, Sept. 7. (Closes at 4.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave., at 82nd St.—"Treasures from the Kremlin," an exhibit of about a hundred objects made by Russian craftsmen from the twelfth century to the twentieth. Among the works are icons, arms and armor, and coronation regalia; one highlight is Fabergé's fourteen-inch-high stylized representation of the Kremlin in gold, silver, and enamel. Through Sunday, Sept. 2. . . . ¶ A sampling of major twentieth-century art movements can be seen in a show of eighty-five paintings and sculptures on loan (mostly) from private New York collections. Among the works: Picasso's "Bather," Brancusi's "Kiss," and an untitled painting by Nabil Nahas. Among the collectors are Ethel Redner Scull, Clement Greenberg, and Christophe de Menil. Through Sept. 30. . . . ¶ Eighty European landscape drawings, spanning five centuries, from the Lehman Collection. Through Sept. 30. (Open daily except Mondays. Not all the galleries are open all the time during the summer, but in general the hours are Tuesdays, 10 to 8:45; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 4:45; Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—The museum's Department of Architecture and Design has recently acquired a number of objects, including a glass pitcher and a silver tureen and ladle by the nineteenth-century English designer Christopher Dresser; a hanging lamp by Louis Tiffany (made for his own dining room); a folding screen composed of black lacquer plaques by Eileen Gray; and



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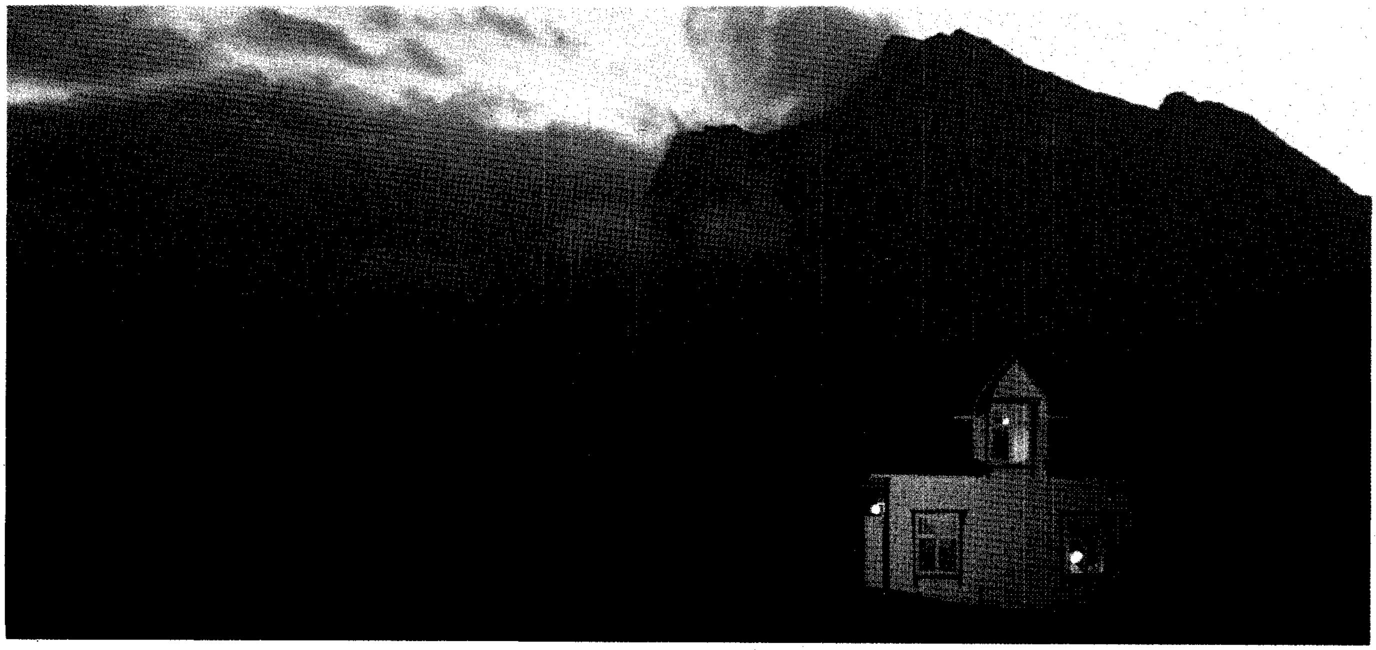

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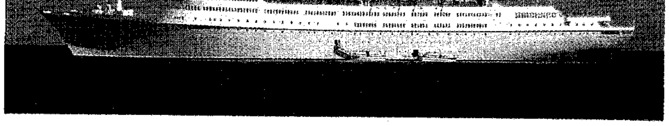

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Renault

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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lamps by Isamu Noguchi. Through Sept. 30. . . . ¶ A show of still-lifes by Patrick Henry Bruce (1880-1936), an American modernist neglected in his lifetime. Through Oct. 9. . . . ¶ A show of eighty newly acquired drawings by Europeans and Americans. Through Nov. 13. . . . **PHOTOGRAPHY:** Black-and-white prints by Larry Fink. Through Oct. 30. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.) . . . **NOTE:** The museum's sculpture garden, 8 W. 54th St., will be open, free, Friday through Sunday, Aug. 31-Sept. 2, from 6 to 10, for the final times this season. Simone Forti, Peter Van Riper, and Yoshiko Chuma will perform experimental dance works on Friday and Saturday at 8.

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, 1071 Fifth Ave., at 89th St.—"Matisse and Master Drawings from the Baltimore Museum of Art," a show of seventy-three Matisse paintings, drawings, and sculptures together with ninety-one drawings and watercolors by other nineteenth- and twentieth-century artists. Through Oct. 8. . . . ¶ More than seventy examples of George Rickey's kinetic sculptures. Starts Saturday, Sept. 1. (Open daily. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, and Labor Day, 11 to 5.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St.—A survey of the sculptures of George Segal, ranging from early life-size white-plaster figures to the more recent solid-color pieces. Also early pastels. Through Sept. 9. . . . ¶ "The Decade in Review: Selections from the 1970's," a show of some of the paintings, sculptures, photographs, and works on paper that were added to the collection in the seventies. Through Sunday, Sept. 2. . . . ¶ "Selected Recent Acquisitions: Graphics," includes works by Isabel Bishop, Richard Estes, Larry Rivers, and many others. Through Oct. 21. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Wednesday through Friday, Aug. 29-31, from 1 to 8, and Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 1-2, noon to 6; thereafter, the museum resumes its fall schedule—Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 6.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—An exhibit of paintings and drawings by seven Israeli artists. Through Monday, Sept. 3. (Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5; Labor Day, 1 to 5.)

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, Central Park W. at 79th St.—In the Hall of Late Dinosaurs, an exact polyester-resin-and-fibreglass replica of the museum's triceratops skeleton is being assembled, and the skeleton itself, dismantled for the reproduction, is being reassembled. (Open daily, 10 to 5, and Wednesday and Friday evenings until 9; Labor Day, 11 to 5.)

ASIA HOUSE, 112 E. 64th St.—A show of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century textiles from the Indonesian archipelago. These multicolored fabrics, many of which carry designs unique to the island where the cloth was made, functioned as ceremonial cloths, wearing apparel, and decoration. Through Monday, Sept. 3. (Open daily. Hours: Weekdays, 10 to 5, and Thursday evenings until 8:30; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

COOPER-HEWITT MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—A show of architectural drawings by Alvar Aalto (1898-1976), along with furniture, glassware, fabrics, and other articles designed by him. Through Sept. 16. . . . ¶ More than a hundred examples of glass objects that date from the first century to the present, with emphasis on the last three centuries. Through Nov. 25. . . . ¶ "Fantastic Illustration and Design in Britain, 1850-1930," a loan show of book illustrations (Rossetti, Beardsley, Arthur Rackham, Beatrix Potter), interspersed with decorative objects of the period, including a christening set (a silver cup, knife, fork, and spoon), which Kate Greenaway adapted from her illustrations for "Under the Window." Through Sunday, Sept. 2. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

GROLIER CLUB, 47 E. 60th St.—A display of more than a hundred and thirty unorthodox books made in the past ten years or so by artists using such processes as offset lithography and Xerox reproduction. Included (as a sort of progenitor) is Marcel Duchamp's 1934 pile of lithographed notes spread in a box; among other practitioners are Edward Ruscha, Carl Andre, Sol LeWitt, Don Celender, and Dieter Rot. Through Friday, Aug. 31. (Open Mondays through Fridays, 10 to 5.)

JEWISH MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—A show of paintings and sculptures—with motifs based on Jewish mysticism—by David Aronson. Further works, these taken from New Testament subjects, are at the National Academy of Design (see listing below). Through Tuesday, Sept. 4. (Open daily except Fridays and Saturdays. Hours: Mondays through Thursdays, noon to 5; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

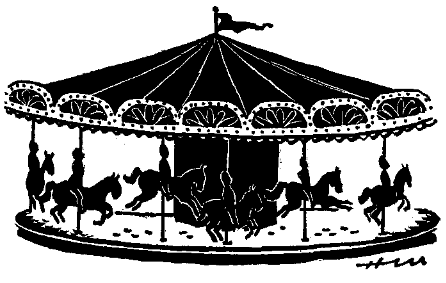
NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DESIGN, 1083 Fifth Ave., at 89th St.—A show of close to eighty paintings of the American West in the nineteenth century and the twentieth by, among others, George Catlin, Frederic Remington, Georgia O'Keeffe, and Fritz Scholder. Through Sept. 16. . . . ¶ Nineteen paintings by David Aronson. Through Tuesday, Sept. 4. (Open daily, except Mondays, 1 to 5.)

NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—"Artists and Architects of the New York Subway" offers photographs, the new subway-route map, paintings of subway construction, models and plans for new subway projects, and artifacts—signals, ticket choppers, the grille from a change booth—that date back seventy-five years to the original subways. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Fridays, 11 to 5; Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

MUSIC

NEW YORK CITY OPERA—Opening performances of two week-long engagements of operetta, after which the company will move into its regular season, continuing through Sunday, Nov. 11. Victor Herbert's NAUGHTY MARIETTA, Thursday through Sunday, Aug. 30-Sept. 2, with alternating casts: Elizabeth Hynes, Susanne Marsee, Howard Hensel, and Alan Titus, or Gianna Rolandi, Joanna Simon, Jacque Trussel, and Charles Roe. Conducted variously by John Mauceri and Brian Salesky. . . . ¶ Lehár's THE MERRY WIDOW, Wednesday through Sunday, Sept. 5-9, with Diana Soviero, Marianna Christos, Alan Titus, Bruce Reed, David Rae Smith, and James Billings, or Glenys Fowles, Kathryn Bouleyn, Howard Hensel, Henry Price, David Rae Smith, and James Billings. Conducted variously by Imre Pallo and Judith Somogi. (New York State Theatre, Lincoln Center. 877-4727. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 1.)

SANTA FE CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL—The last two programs in a series of concerts. The participants include Edward Auer, Alicia Schacter, and André-Michel Schub, piano; James Buswell, Ani Kavafian, and Daniel Phillips, violin; Timothy Eddy and Ralph Kirshbaum, cello; and Heiichiro Ohyama and Walter Trampler, viola. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Wednesday and Thursday, Aug. 29-30, at 8, with pre-concert recitals at 7.)



RUSSELL SHERMAN—Piano. (Alice Tully Hall. 362-1911. Friday, Sept. 7, at 8.)

IN THE COUNTRY

TANGLEWOOD FESTIVAL—Final performances of the season—Friday, Aug. 31, at 7: Shaun Cassidy. . . . ¶ Saturday, Sept. 1, at 7: Keith Jarrett. (Lenox, Mass. For information about tickets, call 977-9020, in New York.)

SARATOGA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER—Final performances of the season—Wednesday, Aug. 29, at 7: Shaun Cassidy and Fandango. . . . ¶ Thursday, Aug. 30, at 7: Arlo Guthrie and Pete Seeger. . . . ¶ Friday, Aug. 31, at 7: Kansas and Le Roux. . . . ¶ Saturday, Sept. 1, at 7: Charlie Daniels Band and Sea Level. . . . ¶ Sunday, Sept. 2, at 7: Tom T. Hall, Jeannie C. Riley, Porter Wagoner, Charly McClain, and Jerry Clower. . . . ¶ Monday, Sept. 3, at 7: Don Williams, Barbara Fairchild, Bobby Bare, and Ed Bruce. (Saratoga Springs. For information about tickets, call 977-9020, in New York.)

SPORTS

BASEBALL—METS at Shea Stadium: Vs. Atlanta, Wednesday, Aug. 29, at 2:05. . . . ¶ Pittsburgh, Friday, Sept. 7, at 8:05, and Saturday, Sept. 8, at 2:05. . . . YANKEES at Yankee Stadium: Vs. Kansas City, Thursday and Friday, Aug. 30-31, at 8, and Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 1-2, at 2. . . . ¶ Boston, Monday, Sept. 3, at 2, and Tuesday and Wednesday, Sept. 4-5, at 8.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL—Saturday, Sept. 8: Grambling vs. Morgan State, in a benefit game, at Yankee Stadium, at 7:30. . . . ¶ Rutgers vs. Holy Cross, at New Brunswick, at 2:30.

PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL—Sunday, Sept. 2: Jets vs. Cleveland Browns, at Shea Stadium, at 4. . . . ¶ Giants vs. Philadelphia Eagles, at Philadelphia.

RACING—At BELMONT: Mondays and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 1, and Sundays at 1:05, from Wednesday, Aug. 29, through Monday, Oct. 22. The Fall Highweight Handicap, Wednesday, Aug. 29; the Flower Bowl Handicap, Saturday, Sept. 1; the Gazelle Handicap, Sunday, Sept. 2; the Jerome Handicap, Monday, Sept. 3; and the Marlboro Cup Invitational Handicap, Saturday, Sept. 8. (Frequent trains leave Penn Station for the track Wednesdays through Fridays between 11 and 1:10, and Saturdays, Sundays, and Labor Day between 11 and 1:15.) . . . ATLANTIC CITY, Mays Landing, N.J.: Wednesdays and Fridays at 7:30, and Saturdays and Labor Day at 1:30; through Saturday, Sept. 22. The United Nations Handicap, Saturday, Sept. 1, and the World's Playground, Monday, Sept. 3. . . . MONMOUTH PARK, Oceanport, N.J.: Weekdays at 1:30; through Monday, Sept. 3. The Choice Handicap, Monday, Sept. 3. (A special train will leave Penn Station for the track Saturday and Labor Day at 11:35.) . . . MEADOWLANDS: Weeknights at 8, from Tuesday, Sept. 4, through Monday, Dec. 31. The Long Look, Tuesday, Sept. 4.

RUNNING—The Women's Half Marathon, of 13.1 miles, will start at eleven on Saturday, Sept. 8, in Central Park near East 90th Street, and finish at the same place.

SOCCER—At Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands: Cosmos vs. Vancouver, in the final game of the North American Soccer League's semifinal playoff series, Saturday, Sept. 1, at 2. . . . ¶ Soccer Bowl Championship, Saturday, Sept. 8, at 2. (For information about tickets, call 265-8600.)

TENNIS—United States Open Championships. (U.S.T.A. National Center, Flushing Meadow. Wednesday, Aug. 29, through Thursday, Sept. 6, at 11 and 7:30, and Friday through Sunday, Sept. 7-9, at 2. For information about tickets, call 271-5100.)

TROTTING—At YONKERS RACEWAY: Weeknights at 8; through Wednesday, Oct. 17. . . . SARATOGA RACEWAY, Saratoga Springs: Weeknights at 8:15, except Labor Day, when post time will be 2:15; through Saturday, Nov. 17.

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

(If the weather looks doubtful, call the New York Parks Department, 755-4100, for news. The same number may be called for information about all free entertainment in the city.)

NEW YORK DANCE FESTIVAL—The first nine in a series of twelve free performances—Satur-

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day and Sunday, Sept. 1-2, at 8: Copacetics, Nobuko Sakamoto, Rachel Lampert and Dancers, Rebecca Wright, and Danny Grossman Dance Company. . . . ¶ Sunday, Sept. 2, at 3 (a one-hour program): Alvin Ailey Repertory Ensemble. . . . ¶ Monday and Tuesday, Sept. 3-4, at 8: Musawwir Gymnastic Dance Ensemble, Ann Marie deAngelo & Peter Fonseca, Atlanta Ballet, Matthew Diamond & Douglas Varone, and Loremil Machado Afro-Brazilian Dance Company. . . . ¶ Thursday and Friday, Sept. 6-7, at 8: Indrani & Sukanya, Don Redlich Dance Company, Karena Brock & William Starrett, Wendy Osserman Dance Company, and Alvin Ailey Repertory Ensemble. . . . ¶ Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 8-9, at 8: Vanaver Caravan, Phyllis Lamhut Dance Company, Elisa Monte & David Brown, Houston Ballet, and Dan Wagoner and Dancers. . . . ¶ Sunday, Sept. 9, at 3 (a one-hour program): Vanaver Caravan, Boyer & Bruggeman, and Asakawalker Dance Company. (Delacorte Theatre, Central Park near W. 81st St. Rain date, Wednesday, Sept. 5. For information about tickets, call 535-5630.)

New York Philharmonic—Final concerts in the park. Andrew Davis will be conducting in MARINE PARK, Brooklyn, Thursday, Aug. 30, at 8:30. . . . CUNNINGHAM PARK, Queens, Friday, Aug. 31, at 8:30. . . . VAN CORTLANDT PARK, Bronx, Saturday, Sept. 1, at 8:30.

Central Park Mall—Jens Nygaard conducting the Naumburg Symphony Orchestra in an all-Mozart program, with Rodney Friend, violin; Sol Greitzer, viola; and Jane Bryden, soprano. (Sunday, Sept. 2, at 5.)

Lincoln Center Out-of-Doors—A three-week festival of jazz, dance, chamber music, cabaret, country music, Hispanic specials, musical comedy, and street theatre. LINCOLN CENTER PLAZA: Wednesday, Aug. 29, Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers at noon, the Off-Center Theatre at 2:30, and the Mettawee River Theatre Company at 5. . . . ¶ Thursday, Aug. 30, the Judith Scott Dance Theatre, at 11, the Alpha Omega 1-7 Theatrical Dance Company at 2:30, and the Mt. Laurel Regional Ballet at 5. . . . ¶ Friday, Aug. 31, the Roadside Theatre at 2:30 and the Baker's Half Dozen at 5. . . . ¶ Saturday, Sept. 1, Mini Events at noon, Latino Playwrights' Workshop Reading Series at 2:30, and Dinizulu & His African Dancers, Singers & Drummers at 5. . . . ¶ Sunday, Sept. 2, Mini Events at noon, Workshops for Careers in the Arts at 2:30, and a symposium at 4. . . . DAMROSCH PARK: A musical show called "On Broadway Tonight," with Mimi Hines, Earl Wrightson & Lois Hunt, and Sandman Sims, Wednesday through Saturday, Aug. 29-Sept. 1, at 8. (For daily information, call 877-0996.)

Jones Beach Theatre—A revival of THE MUSIC MAN, with Don Stewart. (Nightly at 8:30. For tickets, call 516 221-1000. Closes Sunday, Sept. 2.)

Washington Square Outdoor Art Exhibit—The semiannual show will be on view Saturday through Monday, Sept. 1-3; Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 8-9; and Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 15-16, from noon until sundown.

Deep Breathing—The roadways in Central Park are given over to joggers, roller skaters, skateboarders, and strollers except for workday rush hours. The park closes at ten at night Mondays through Thursdays.

COMING EVENTS

(A calendar for readers who plan a month or so ahead.)

Automobile Racing—United States Grand Prix. (Watkins Glen, Oct. 7.)

Baseball—METS at Shea Stadium: Vs. Pittsburgh, Sept. 9 (day). Philadelphia, Sept. 11-13 (night). Chicago, Sept. 18 (twi-night doubleheader). Montreal, Sept. 19-20 (twi-night doubleheaders). St. Louis, Sept. 21 (n) and Sept. 22-23 (d). . . . YANKEES at Yankee Stadium: Vs. Detroit, Sept. 14 (night) and Sept. 15-16 (day). Cleveland, Sept. 25-27 (n). Toronto, Sept. 28 (n) and Sept. 29-30 (d). . . . NATIONAL LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP PLAYOFFS: Start Oct. 2. . . . AMERICAN LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP PLAYOFFS: Start Oct. 3. . . . WORLD SERIES: Starts Oct. 9 in the home park of the American League champion.

Professional Basketball—Exhibition games—At MADISON SQUARE GARDEN: Boston vs. Philadelphia and Knicks vs. Nets, Sept. 27. . . . ¶ Washington vs. Detroit and Knicks vs. Boston, Sept. 29. . . . RUTGERS UNIVERSITY ATHLETIC CENTER, Piscataway, N.J.: Nets vs. Philadelphia, Sept. 20.

College Football—SATURDAY, SEPT. 15: Army vs. Connecticut, at West Point, and Fordham vs. Millersville, at Fordham. . . . SATURDAY, SEPT. 22: Colgate vs. Lehigh, at Hamilton; Columbia vs. Harvard, at Baker Field; Dartmouth vs. Princeton, at Hanover; Fordham vs. Rochester, at Fordham; Manhattan vs. Siena, at Mount St. Michael Field; Pennsylvania vs. Cornell, at Philadelphia; Rutgers vs. Bucknell, at New Brunswick; and Yale vs. Brown, at New Haven. . . . SATURDAY, SEPT. 29: Army vs. North Carolina, at West Point; Cornell vs. Colgate, at Ithaca; Fordham vs. Wagner, at Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands; Princeton vs. Rutgers, at Princeton; and Yale vs. Connecticut, at New Haven. . . . SATURDAY, OCT. 6: Army vs. Duke, at West Point; Brown vs. Princeton, at Providence; Columbia vs. Pennsylvania, at Baker Field; Dartmouth vs. Holy Cross, at Hanover; Manhattan vs. Livingston, at Mount St. Michael Field; Navy vs. Air Force, at Annapolis; Rutgers vs. Temple, at New Brunswick; Trinity vs. Williams, at Hartford; and Yale vs. Colgate, at New Haven.

Professional Football—SUNDAY, SEPT. 9: Giants vs. St. Louis Cardinals, at Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands, and Jets vs. New England Patriots, at Foxboro. . . . SUNDAY, SEPT. 16: Jets vs. Detroit Lions, at Shea Stadium. . . . MONDAY, SEPT. 17: Giants vs. Washington Redskins, at Washington. . . . SUNDAY, SEPT. 23: Giants vs. Philadelphia Eagles, at Giants Stadium, and Jets vs. Buffalo Bills, at Buffalo. . . . SUNDAY, SEPT. 30: Jets vs. Miami Dolphins, at Shea Stadium, and Giants vs. New Orleans Saints, at New Orleans. . . . SUNDAY, OCT. 7: Giants vs. Tampa Bay Buccaneers, at Giants Stadium, and Jets vs. Baltimore Colts, at Baltimore.

Hockey—Exhibition games—At MADISON SQUARE GARDEN: Rangers vs. Philadelphia Flyers, Sept. 26. . . . ¶ Rangers vs. Islanders, Oct. 2. . . . NASSAU COLISEUM: Islanders vs. Philadelphia Flyers, Sept. 22. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Buffalo Sabres, Sept. 25. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Atlanta Flames, Sept. 27. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Rangers, Sept. 29.

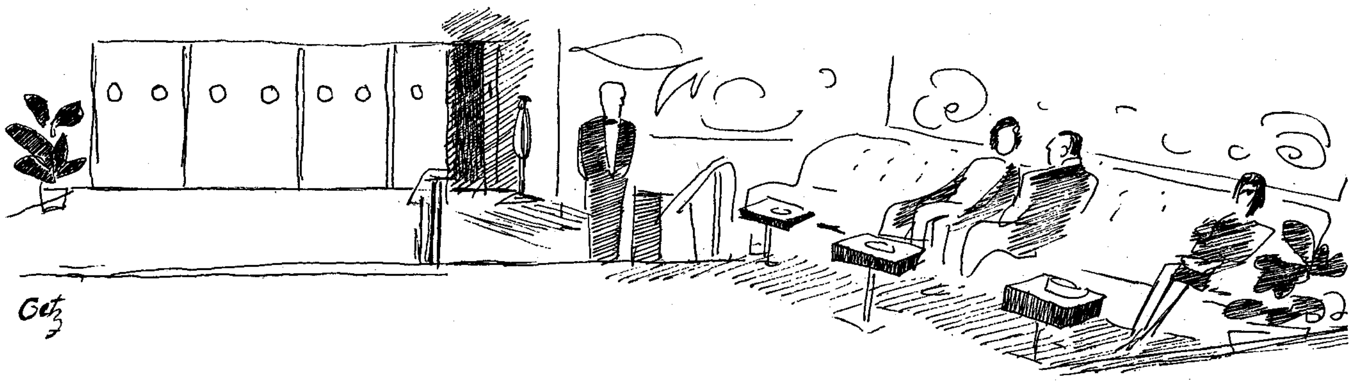
Racing—At Laurel, Md.: Oct. 1-Dec. 31.

Music—METROPOLITAN OPERA (580-9830): The season will open on Sept. 24, with Verdi's "Otello," and will run through April 19. . . . AVERY FISHER HALL (874-2424): Opening performance of the New York Philharmonic, Rafael Kubelík conducting, Sept. 13. . . . ¶ Ali Akbar Khan, sarod, Sept. 16. . . . CARNEGIE HALL (247-7459): The Philadelphia Orchestra, Oct. 2. . . . ¶ Moscow State Symphony, Oct. 3. . . . ¶ National Symphony Orchestra, Oct. 5. . . . ¶ American Symphony Orchestra, Oct. 7. . . . ¶ Moscow Pops, Oct. 9. . . . KAUFMANN CONCERT HALL, 92nd Street Y (427-6000): Robert Goldsand, piano, Sept. 10, 17, and 24. . . . ¶ Ivan Davis, piano, Sept. 12. . . . ¶ Eugene List, piano, Sept. 15. . . . ¶ Chamber Music at the Y, Sept. 19. . . . ¶ Richard and John Contiguglia, piano four hands, Oct. 2. . . . ¶ Alexis Weissenberg, piano, Oct. 4.

Theatre—Some productions scheduled to open during the next several weeks: "Evita," a musical with lyrics by Tim Rice, music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, and a cast headed by Patti LuPone, Mandy Patinkin, and Bob Gunton. . . . ¶ A play with music called "The 1940's Radio Hour," a re-creation of a live radio broadcast, with a swing band, skits, commercials, and dancing. The book is by Walton Jones and the music and lyrics are by, among others, Duke Ellington, Richard Rodgers, Lorenz Hart, Jerome Kern, and George Gershwin. The cast includes Jeff Keller, Crissy Wilzak, and Dee Dee Bridgewater. . . . ¶ A London import, Mary O'Malley's comedy "Once a Catholic," starring Rachel Roberts and Peggy Cass. . . . ¶ A revival of Frank Loesser's musical "The Most Happy Fella," based on Sidney Howard's play "They Knew What They Wanted." Giorgio Tozzi and Sharon Daniels have the leading roles.

Other Dates—The Fall Antiques Show, at the 7th Regiment Armory, Sept. 12-16. . . . ¶ Third-quarter Federal, New York State, and New York City income-tax payments are due Monday, Sept. 17. . . . ¶ The New York Film Festival opens on Sept. 28 at Avery Fisher Hall. Moves next day to Alice Tully Hall: Sept. 29-Oct. 13. Winds up at Avery Fisher Hall on Oct. 14. . . . ¶ The first day of fall is Sept. 23. . . . ¶ Columbus Day will be celebrated on Monday, Oct. 8.

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN



THE MOVIE HOUSES

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ALL FILMS PLAYING AT EAST SIDE AND WEST SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSES ARE DESCRIBED IN BRIEF IN A SECTION STARTING ON PAGE 15. FILMS PLAYING IN THE TIMES SQUARE AREA AND AT REVIVAL HOUSES ARE SO DESCRIBED ONLY IF A DAGGER ACCOMPANIES THE THEATRE LISTING.

EAST SIDE

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Through Sept. 2: "An Actor's Revenge."
Sept. 3: Theatre closed.
Sept. 4: "Notorious."
Sept. 5: "Woman of the Year."
Sept. 6: "The Appointment."
Sept. 7: "Lilith."
Sept. 8: "Two for the Road."

Art, 36 E. 8th. (473-7014)
"Moonraker."

St. Marks Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 8th. (533-9292)
Through Aug. 30: "Dracula" and "Same Time, Next Year."
Aug. 31-Sept. 6: "Escape from Alcatraz" and "Goin' South."
From Sept. 7: To be announced.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
Through Aug. 30: "The Frisco Kid."
From Aug. 31: "El Super."

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"The Seduction of Joe Tynan."

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (685-7652)
"More American Graffiti."

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"North Dallas Forty."

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Sunburn."

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
"More American Graffiti."

Trans-Lux East, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
Through Aug. 30: "Escape from Alcatraz."
From Aug. 31 (tentative): "Nest of Vipers."

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"Till Marriage Do Us Part."

Baronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
"Rich Kids."

Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
"Breaking Away."

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Harold and Maude."

Cinema I, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
"Life of Brian."

Cinema II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-0774)
"Orchestra Rehearsal."

Gemini 1, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
"Manhattan."

Gemini 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-2720)
"The Seduction of Joe Tynan."

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Soldier of Orange."

Loews New York 1, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
"Rocky II."

Loews New York 2, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
"Star Wars."

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"La Cage aux Folles."

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Peppermint Soda."

72nd Street East, 1st Ave. at 72nd. (288-9304)
Through Aug. 30: "Meatballs."
Aug. 31-Sept. 6: "Dracula."
From Sept. 7: To be announced.

Trans-Lux 85th St., Madison at 85th. (288-3180)
"The Seduction of Joe Tynan."

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
Through Aug. 30: "The Muppet Movie."
From Aug. 31: Richard Pryor in a filmed concert.

Loews Orpheum, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
"North Dallas Forty."

Loews Ciné, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (427-1332)
"The Amityville Horror."

86th St. East, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
"Moonraker."

R.K.O. 86th St., Lexington at 86th. (289-8900)
Theatre 1: Through Aug. 30: "Rust Never Sleeps." From Aug. 31: "Manhattan."
Theatre 2: "More American Graffiti."

WEST SIDE

Waverly, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
"The Muppet Movie."

Greenwich, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Through Aug. 30: "Wifemistress" and "Bread and Chocolate."
From Aug. 31: "Rocky II."

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Manhattan."
Theatre 2: "The In-Laws."
Theatre 3: "A Little Romance."
Theatre 4: "Woyzeck."

Harold Clurman, 412 W. 42nd. (594-2370; Wednesdays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Through Aug. 31: "The Passion of Joan of Arc."
Sept. 1-2: "The Blue Angel."
Sept. 3-4: Theatre closed.
Sept. 5-7: "On the Waterfront."
From Sept. 8: "The Strange One."

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"The In-Laws."

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Apocalypse Now."

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (757-2715)
"Manhattan."

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Peppermint Soda."

Little Carnegie, 146 W. 57th. (246-5123)
"The Seduction of Joe Tynan."

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"Why Not!"

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Meetings with Remarkable Men."

Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"The Muppet Movie."

Cinema Studio 1, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
"Woyzeck."

Cinema Studio 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
"The Tree of Wooden Clogs."

Embassy 72nd St., B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
"The Frisco Kid."

Loews 83rd Quad, B'way at 83rd. (877-3190)
Theatre 1: "Bloodline."
Theatre 2: Through Aug. 30: "Moonraker." From Aug. 31: "Escape from Alcatraz."
Theatre 3: "Manhattan."
Theatre 4: "The In-Laws."

New Yorker, B'way at 88th. (874-9189)
"The Muppet Movie."

Olympia, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Through Aug. 30: "Dracula" and "The Brink's Job."
Aug. 31-Sept. 6: "Escape from Alcatraz" and "King of the Gypsies."
From Sept. 7: "Manhattan" and "Rabbit Test."

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion, B'way at 44th. (582-1795)
"Alien."

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)
"Sunburn." (†)

Embassy, B'way at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: "The In-Laws." (†)
Theatre 3: "Bloodline." (†)
Theatre 4: "The Frisco Kid." (†)

Forum, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)
"Escape from Alcatraz." (†)

Loews Astor Plaza, B'way at 44th. (869-8340)
"Star Wars." (†)

Loews State 1, B'way at 45th. (582-5060)
"North Dallas Forty." (†)

Loews State 2, B'way at 45th. (582-5070)
"Dracula." (†)

National, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
"Moonraker." (†)

Rivoli, B'way at 49th. (247-1633)
"More American Graffiti." (†)

R.K.O. Cinerama 1, B'way at 47th. (975-8366)
"Rocky II." (†)

R.K.O. Cinerama 2, B'way at 47th. (975-8369)
"The Amityville Horror." (†)

Victoria, B'way at 46th. (354-5636)
Through Sept. 4: "Meatballs." (†)
From Sept. 5: To be announced.

REVIVAL HOUSES

Bleecker St. Cinema, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Aug. 29: "Duel in the Sun" (1947), directed by King Vidor, with Jennifer Jones, Gregory Peck, Joseph Cotten, Charles Bickford, and Lillian Gish; and "The Outlaw" (1947), directed by Howard Hughes, with Jane Russell, Jack Buetel, Walter Huston, and Thomas Mitchell.
Aug. 30: "I Am Curious—Yellow" (1969) and "I Am Curious—Blue" (1970), both films in Swedish, directed by Vilgot Sjöman.
Aug. 31: "Barbarella" (1968), directed by Roger Vadim, with Jane Fonda and David Hemmings; and "The Cheerleaders" (1973).
Sept. 1: "The Devil in Miss Jones" (1973) and "Hot Circuit" (1972).
Sept. 2: "The Magic Flute" (1975), in Swedish, directed by Ingmar Bergman.
Sept. 3: "The Bicycle Thief" (†); and "Shoe-Shine" (1946), in Italian, directed by Vittorio De Sica.
Sept. 4: "Sword of the Beast" (1965), in

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Japanese, directed by Hideo Gosha; and "The Sword of Doom" (1967), in Japanese, directed by Kihachi Okamoto.

Sept. 5: "The Seven Year Itch" (1955), directed by Billy Wilder, with Marilyn Monroe, Tom Ewell, Victor Moore, Evelyn Keyes, and Sonny Tufts; and "The Girl Can't Help It" (1957), directed by Frank Tashlin, with Tom Ewell, Jayne Mansfield, and Edmond O'Brien.

Sept. 6: "The Scarlet Empress" (†) and "Pandora's Box." (†)

Sept. 7: "That Obscure Object of Desire" (1977), in French, directed by Luis Buñuel, with Fernando Rey, Carole Bouquet, and Angela Molina; and "Claire's Knee." (†)

Sept. 8: "Tropic of Cancer" (1970), directed by Joseph Strick, with Rip Torn; and "Quiet Days in Clichy" (1970), directed by Jens Jorgen Thorsen, with Paul Valjean.

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. at 57th. (757-2131)

Aug. 29: "The Lady Eve" (1941), directed by Preston Sturges, with Barbara Stanwyck, Henry Fonda, and Charles Coburn; and "Unfaithfully Yours" (1948), directed by Preston Sturges, with Rex Harrison, Linda Darnell, Edgar Kennedy, and Rudy Vallée.

Aug. 30: "Irma la Douce" (1963), directed by Billy Wilder, with Jack Lemmon, Shirley MacLaine, Lou Jacobi, and Herschel Bernardi; and "Never on Sunday" (1960), in English and Greek, directed by Jules Dassin, with Melina Mercouri.

Aug. 31: "Rules of the Game" (1939), in French, directed by Jean Renoir, with Marcel Dalio and Nora Gregor; and "Jules and Jim" (1962), in French, directed by François Truffaut, with Jeanne Moreau, Oskar Werner, and Henri Serre.

Sept. 1: "East of Eden" (1955), directed by Elia Kazan, with James Dean and Julie Harris; and "Splendor in the Grass" (1961), directed by Elia Kazan, with Natalie Wood, Warren Beatty, Sandy Dennis, Barbara Loden, and Pat Hingle.

Sept. 2: "The Lion in Winter" (1968), directed by Anthony Harvey, with Peter O'Toole and Katharine Hepburn; and "A Man for All Seasons." (†)

Sept. 3: "Intermezzo" (†) and "Brief Encounter." (†)

Sept. 4: "Suddenly, Last Summer" (†); and "This Property Is Condemned" (1966), directed by Sydney Pollack, with Natalie Wood, Robert Redford, Charles Bronson, and Kate Reid.

Sept. 5: "The Lost Honor of Katharina Blum" (1975), in German, directed by Volker Schlöndorff and Margarethe von Trotta; and "Coup de Grâce." (†)

Sept. 6: "42nd Street" (1933), directed by Lloyd Bacon, with Bebe Daniels, Ruby Keeler, Dick Powell, and Warner Baxter; and "Gold Diggers of 1935." (†)

Sept. 7: "La Strada" (1954), in Italian, directed by Federico Fellini, with Anthony Quinn, Richard Basehart, and Giulietta Masina; and "Stromboli" (1950), in Italian, directed by Roberto Rossellini, with Ingrid Bergman.

Sept. 8: "Last Tango in Paris" (1972), in French and English, directed by Bernardo Bertolucci, with Marlon Brando and Maria Schneider; and "Contempt" (1964), in French, directed by Jean-Luc Godard, with Brigitte Bardot, Jack Palance, Fritz Lang, and Michel Piccoli.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)

Through Aug. 30: "The Story of Joanna" (1975) and "Barbara Broadcast" (1978).

Aug. 31-Sept. 1: "Black Orpheus" (1959), in Portuguese, directed by Marcel Camus, with Marpessa Dawn; and "The Harder They Come" (1973), directed by Perry Henzell, with Jimmy Cliff.

Sept. 2-3: "Jaws" (1975), directed by Steven Spielberg, with Roy Scheider, Robert Shaw, and Richard Dreyfuss; and "The Sugarland Express." (†)

Sept. 4: "Slave of Love" (1976), in Russian, directed by Nikita Mikhalkov; and "Viva Italia!" (†)

Sept. 5-6: "Desperate Living" (1977) and "Female Trouble" (1975), both directed by John Waters.

Sept. 7-8: "Fellini's Casanova" (1977), directed by Federico Fellini, with Donald Sutherland; and "8½" (1963), in Italian, directed by Federico Fellini, with Marcello Mastroianni, Anouk Aimée, Sandra Milo, and Claudia Cardinale.

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.) "Rust Never Sleeps." (†)

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

Aug. 29: "Ride the High Country" (1962), directed by Sam Peckinpah, with Joel McCrea, Randolph Scott, and Mariette Hartley; and "Three Godfathers" (1949), directed by John Ford, with John Wayne, Pedro Armendariz, and Harry Carey, Jr.

Aug. 30-Sept. 1: "Wife Versus Secretary" (1936), directed by Clarence Brown, with Clark Gable, Jean Harlow, Myrna Loy, and James Stewart; and "Too Hot to Handle" (1938), directed by Jack Conway, with Myrna Loy, Clark Gable, Walter Pidgeon, and Walter Connolly.

Sept. 2-4: "The Wizard of Oz" (1939), directed by Victor Fleming, with Judy Garland, Bert Lahr, Frank Morgan, Ray Bolger, and Jack Haley; and "Forbidden Planet." (†)

Sept. 5-8: "Ninotchka" (1939), directed by Ernst Lubitsch, with Greta Garbo, Melvyn Douglas, and Sig Rumann; and "Conquest" (1937), directed by Clarence Brown, with Greta Garbo and Charles Boyer.

Thalia, B'way at 95th. (222-3370)

Aug. 29: "Crimes at the Dark House" (1940), directed by George King, with Tod Slaughter and Hilary Eaves; and "Murder in the Red Barn" (1936), directed by Milton Rosmer, with Tod Slaughter and Sophie Stewart.

Aug. 30: "The Crimes of Stephen Hawke" (1936) and "Sexton Blake and the Hooded Terror" (1938), both films directed by George King, with Tod Slaughter.

Aug. 31-Sept. 1: "Sweeney Todd, the Demon Barber of Fleet Street" (1936) and "The Face at the Window" (1939), both films directed by George King, with Tod Slaughter.

Sept. 2: "Outrageous!" (1977), directed by Richard Benner, with Craig Russell and Hollis McLaren; and "Some Like It Hot" (1959), directed by Billy Wilder, with Marilyn Monroe, Tony Curtis, Jack Lemmon, and Joe E. Brown.

Sept. 3: "Gold Diggers of 1935" (†) and "Pal Joey." (†)

Sept. 4: "The Great McGinty" (†) and "The Power and the Glory." (†)

Sept. 5: "The Savage Innocents" (1961), directed by Nicholas Ray, with Anthony Quinn, Yoko Tani, and Peter O'Toole; and "Born to Be Bad" (1950), directed by Nicholas Ray, with Joan Fontaine, Robert Ryan, Zachary Scott, Joan Leslie, and Mel Ferrer.

Sept. 6: "Diabolique" (1955), in French, directed by Henri-Georges Clouzot, with Simone Signoret, Vera Clouzot, and Paul Meurisse; and "La Prisonnière." (†)

Sept. 7-8: "A Bill of Divorcement" (†); and "Stage Door" (1937), directed by Gregory La Cava, with Ginger Rogers, Katharine Hepburn, Adolphe Menjou, and Franklin Pangborn.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

Through Aug. 30: "The Women" (1939), directed by George Cukor, with Norma Shearer, Rosalind Russell, Joan Crawford, and Paulette Goddard; and "Dinner at Eight" (1933), directed by George Cukor, with Jean Harlow, Marie Dressler, and John Barrymore.

Aug. 31-Sept. 1: "Castle in the Desert" (1942), directed by Harry Lackman, a Charlie Chan mystery, with Sidney Toler as the detective; and "The Casino Murder Case" (1935), directed by Edwin L. Marin, with Paul Lukas, Rosalind Russell, Alison Skipworth, and Donald Cook.

Sept. 2-3: "The Gang's All Here" (1943), directed by Busby Berkeley, with Alice Faye, Carmen Miranda, James Ellison, Charlotte Greenwood, and Edward Everett Horton; and "Weekend in Havana." (†)

Sept. 4: "Midnight" (1939), directed by Mitchell Leisen, with Claudette Colbert, Don Ameche, John Barrymore, Mary Astor, and Francis Lederer; and "Practically Yours." (†)

Sept. 5: "China Seas" (†) and "Hold Your Man." (†)

Sept. 6: "High Society" (1956), directed by Charles Walters, with Bing Crosby, Grace Kelly, Frank Sinatra, Celeste Holm, John Lund, and Louis Calhern; and "Kiss Me Kate" (1953), directed by George Sidney, with Kathryn Grayson, Howard Keel, Ann Miller, and Keenan Wynn.

Sept. 7-8: "Charlie Chan in the Secret Service" (1944) and "Jade Mask" (1945), both films directed by Phil Rosen, with Sidney Toler as the detective.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Auditorium, 11 W. 53rd St. (956-7078)—Aug. 30 at 2:30: "Aelita" (1924), a Russian silent film, directed by Y. Protazanov; no English inter-titles. . . . ¶ Aug. 30 at 6: "The Cigarette Girl from Masselprom" (1924), a Russian silent film, with no English inter-titles. . . . ¶ Aug. 30 at 8:30: "Red Imps" (1923), a Russian silent film, directed by I. Perestiani; no English inter-titles. . . . ¶ Aug. 31 at 2:30: "The Cigarette Girl from Masselprom.". . . ¶ Aug. 31 at 6: A program of British films made between 1901 and 1911 and United States films made between 1903 and 1907. . . . ¶ Sept. 1 at noon: "Hands Up!" (1926), a silent film, directed by Clarence Badger, with Raymond Griffith, Marian Nixon, Montagu Love, and Mack Swain. . . . ¶ Sept. 1 at 2:30: "Death Ray" (1925), a Russian silent film, directed by L. Kuleshov, with V. I. Pudovkin; no English inter-titles. . . . ¶ Sept. 1 at 5: "Aelita.". . . ¶ Sept. 2 at noon: "Hands Up!". . . ¶ Sept. 2 at 2:30: "A Kiss for Mary Pickford" (1927), a Russian silent film, directed by S. Komarov, with Igor Ilinsky, using footage from the 1926 Mary Pickford-Douglas Fairbanks trip to Moscow; no English inter-titles. . . . ¶ Sept. 2 at 5: "Stagecoach" (1939), directed by John Ford, with John Wayne, Claire Trevor, Andy Devine, and John Carradine. . . . ¶ Sept. 3 at noon: "A Ballad of Love" (1965), in Russian, directed by M. Bogin; no English subtitles. . . . ¶ Sept. 3 at 2:30: "A Kiss for Mary Pickford.". . . ¶ Sept. 3 at 6: "Death Ray.". . . ¶ Sept. 4 at noon: "A Ballad of Love.". . . ¶ Sept. 4 at 2:30: "Stagecoach.". . . ¶ Sept. 4 at 6: "Red Imps.". . . ¶ Sept. 6 at 2:30: "Kino-Eye" (1924), a Russian silent film, directed by D. Vertov; no English inter-titles. . . . ¶ Sept. 6 at 6: "A Sixth of the World" (1926), a Russian silent documentary film, directed by D. Vertov; no English inter-titles. . . . ¶ Sept. 6 at 8:30: "Forward, Soviet!" (1926), a Russian silent documentary film, directed by D. Vertov; no English inter-titles. . . . ¶ Sept. 7 at 2:30: "Zvenigora" (1927), a Russian silent film, directed by A. Dovzhenko; no English inter-titles. . . . ¶ Sept. 7 at 6: A program of films made by D. W. Griffith at Biograph between 1908 and 1913. . . . ¶ Sept. 8 at noon: "A Summer to Remember" (1960), in Russian, directed by G. Danelia and I. Talankin; English subtitles. . . . ¶ Sept. 8 at 2:30: "A Sixth of the World.". . . ¶ Sept. 8 at 5: "Forward, Soviet!" (A limited number of tickets are available, but only to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)

Entermedia, 2nd Ave. at 12th St. (475-4191)—A series of science-fiction and fantasy films, with a double feature each day through Sept. 3, starting in the late afternoon. Among the films showing this week are "King Kong," "The Day Mars Invaded Earth," and "Invasion of the Body Snatchers." For exact time and film schedules, our best advice is to call the theatre.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN THESE PAGES DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

An Actor's Revenge (1963)—Directed by Kon Ichikawa. In Japanese. (Little Theatre, Public Theatre; through Sept. 2.)

The Amityville Horror—Based on the book, which should have been called "The Amityville Nuisance." A young couple (James Brolin and Margot Kidder) move into a new house and ascribe everything that goes wrong to demons. Everything that goes wrong in the movie can be ascribed to cheap tricks. With Rod Steiger as the obligatory priest. Directed by Stuart Rosenberg. (Reviewed in our issue of 8/13/79.) (Loews Ciné, and R.K.O. Cinerama 2.)

Apocalypse Now—With Marlon Brando, Robert Duvall, and Martin Sheen; directed by Francis Coppola. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Ziegfeld.)

The Appointment (1969)—With Omar Sharif, Anouk Aimée, and Lotte Lenya; directed by Sidney Lumet. (Little Theatre, Public Theatre; Sept. 6.)

The Bicycle Thief (1949)—Vittorio De Sica's story of a poor man's search for his stolen bicycle is deceptively simple. At first, there is ironic tenderness; humanity observed with compassion but without illusion. Then the search becomes an odyssey of poverty, and the richnesses and the enigmas sneak up on the audience. What is the meaning of the seeress's words? How is it that the hero who is searching for the bicycle thief becomes the bicycle thief? This Neo-Realist classic is on just about everybody's list of the greatest films. Cesare Zavattini wrote the script. In Italian. (Bleecker St. Cinema; Sept. 3.)

A Bill of Divorcement (1932)—The dialogue has the creaky sound of classy, overcivilized theatre; the film is just barely adapted from Clemence Dane's play about a father and daughter doomed by hereditary insanity—the kind of play in which the daughter is named Sydney Fairchild, her father Hilary Fairchild, and the daughter's boyfriend Kit. But as Sydney, Katharine Hepburn, in her film début, was like nothing that had ever been seen on the screen. It wasn't that she was good, exactly (in fact, her acting was mostly awful), but she was so angular and mannered, with her mouth a scar of suffering, that she was riveting. And John Barrymore, who plays the father, was a fairly riveting performer himself—though his role here is drearily subservient. Young George Cukor directed, in the insulated style all too appropriate to the vehicle. With David Manners (Kit, of course), Billie Burke, Bramwell Fletcher, and Elizabeth Patterson. (Thalia; Sept. 7-8.)

Bloodline—Audrey Hepburn marries Ben Gazzara to secure her inherited position as a pharmaceutical magnate, but he may be the one who killed her father and is out to get her as well. The international cast of suspects also includes James Mason and Omar Sharif, as an adulterous Italian husband with bloodshot eyes. Directed by Terence Young, extracted from the novel by Sidney Sheldon. (7/16/79) (Loews 83rd Quad, and Embassy.)

The Blue Angel (1929)—The director Josef von Sternberg had been working in Hollywood for more than fifteen years when he went to Germany, at Emil Jannings' request, to direct this film; he had directed Jannings in "The Last Command," one of the two American silent films that had won Jannings the Academy Award in 1927-28, and Jannings wanted him to guide his first sound film. They set in motion the Marlene Dietrich myth that was eventually to surpass their fame. Adapted from Heinrich Mann's novel "Professor Unrath," this film deals with the breakdown of an authoritarian personality. Jannings plays the inhibited, tyrannical high-school instructor who is prudishly indignant about his students' visiting Lola Lola (Dietrich), the singer at the Blue Angel; he goes to the café to put a stop to it and instead succumbs to her callous, impassive sexuality. Dietrich's Lola Lola is a rather coarse, plump young beauty; as she sings "Falling in Love Again," her smoldering voice and sadistic indifference suggest sex without romance, love, or sentiment. The pedant becomes her husband, her slave, her stooge; he travels with the café troupe, hawking dirty pictures of his wife. Dietrich is extraordinary, and "The Blue Angel" is a movie you can admire sequence by sequence, because it's made in an imaginative, atmospheric style, yet you may feel that you don't really like it on an emotional level; the sexual humiliation gets very heavy in the scenes in which the teacher, now a clown, returns to his home town and to his old classroom. In German. (Harold Clurman; Sept. 1-2.)

Bread and Chocolate (1974)—With Nino Manfredi and Anna Karina, directed by Franco Brusati. In Italian. (Greenwich; through Aug. 30.)

Breaking Away—A cheerful comedy about four high-school graduates (Dennis Christopher, Dennis Quaid, Daniel Stern, and Jackie Earle Haley) who don't know what to do next. Paul Dooley and Barbara Barrie play a set of parents with confused notions about progress. Directed by Peter Yates, with affection for the middle class, the Indiana landscape, and bicycle racing. (8/6/79) (Coronet.)

Brief Encounter (1946)—David Lean directed this romantic expansion of Noël Coward's one-act play "Still Life," and Celia Johnson and Trevor Howard played the lovers with such touching restraint that they broke hearts all over the world. A craftsmanlike tear-jerker. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Sept. 3.)

The Brink's Job—With Peter Falk, Peter Boyle, Allen Goorwitz, Warren Oates, Gena Rowlands, and Paul Sorvino; directed by William Friedkin. (Olympia; through Aug. 30.)

La Cage aux Folles—A brilliant comedy about a pair of aging homosexuals, one of whom has had a son; the son is eager to marry, his fiancée is extremely conventional, and her family wishes to make the acquaintance of his family. Trouble in paradise, here known as Saint-Tropez. Edouard Molinaro directed. In French. (5/28/79) (68th St. Playhouse.)

China Seas (1935)—Jean Harlow, as tough, hard-drinking China Doll, and classy-lady Rosalind Russell compete for the affections of ship's officer Clark Gable. Russell can't compete, of course, 'cause that common girl is *funny*. Sleazy but likable M-G-M shipboard melodrama, based on the formula that had proved a big hit in 1932 in "Red Dust." With Wallace Beery, in his amiable-villain period; Lewis Stone, in his noble-sufferer period; Robert Benchley as a drunk; and Dudley Digges, C. Aubrey Smith, Akim Tamiroff, Donald Meek, and Edward Brophy. Directed by Tay Garnett, from a wisecracking, sexy screenplay by Jules Furthman and James K. McGuinness. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 5.)

Claire's Knee (1970)—The air is thick with summer and leisure in Eric Rohmer's serene story of a vacationing diplomat (Jean-Claude Brialy) who says he is interested only in women's minds and then has an "undefined desire" to stroke a young girl's knee. There's a rather enigmatic woman novelist who stands in for the director and makes ponderous remarks, but Rohmer's quiet, complacent movie-novel game is pleasing, and a captivatingly gawky teen-age actress, Beatrice Romand, who plays a subsidiary role, looks like a Pisanello princess. In French. (Bleecker St. Cinema; Sept. 7.)

Coup de Grâce (1976)—This Franco-German film version of Marguerite Yourcenar's novel is so gray and bleak and wintry that it's like a classic made in the Soviet Union twenty-five years ago and played intensively on P.B.S. It's by no means bad; the director, Volker Schlöndorff, is highly skilled. But the emotions don't fully emerge, and even after it's over one isn't certain what it was about—though probably we're meant to see that the proud Countess Sophie (Margarethe von Trotta) is so deeply wounded because Erich, the Prussian officer she loves (Matthias Habich, a heel-clicking Richard Harris), doesn't love her that she throws her life away. Her self-destructive passion is only one element in a movie that has a few too many sexual, historical, and political crosscurrents; some of them, such as Erich's sexual involvement with Sophie's brother, Konrad (Rudiger Kirschstein), are presented so elliptically they're like blurred memories of a dream. (Schlöndorff's artistry gets in the viewer's way.) The story takes place in 1919 in the Baltic area (which had just been divided into Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia) during the sporadic fighting among various factions which continued after the official end of the First World War. Sophie, who is struggling to emancipate herself, is involved with the

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Communist cause, while the officer is fighting against Red Army units and mopping up Bolshevik guerrillas. Eventually, she is killed by the man she loves, as in the spy melodramas of thirty years ago; only this time there are more layers of ambiguity about the feelings of each. The legendary cabaret artist Valeska Gert—she played the procuress who got Greta Garbo into the brothel in Pabst's 1925 "Joyless Street"—now appears as Sophie's half-crazed aunt and is utterly bizarre: shrivelled, yet more intensely alive than anyone else in the movie. The screenplay is by Schlöndorff and von Trotta (his wife). In French and German. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Sept. 5.)

Dracula—A decorative, romantic variation on the legend, with roots in a 1927 play. Frank Langella offers a dashing characterization of the popular fiend, opposed in his drive to fulfill himself by Laurence Olivier, who politely plays straight as a Dutch doctor, and Donald Pleasence as the proprietor of a madhouse. Directed by John Badham (who did "Saturday Night Fever") as a melodrama of light and darkness with the emphasis on atmosphere. (7/30/79) (Loews State 2. . . . ¶ St. Marks Cinema, and Olympia; through Aug. 30. . . . ¶ 72nd Street East; Aug. 31-Sept. 6.)

Escape from Alcatraz—Clint Eastwood leads the unprecedented breakout without wasting a word or a grimace. Similar efficiency in the skillful direction, by Don Siegel, sets the movie apart from flashier productions. (7/9/79) (Forum. . . . ¶ Trans-Lux East; through Aug. 30. . . . ¶ St. Marks Cinema, and Olympia; Aug. 31-Sept. 6. . . . ¶ Loews 83rd Quad; starting Aug. 31.)

Forbidden Planet (1956)—The best of the science-fiction interstellar productions of the fifties lifted its plot and atmosphere from Shakespeare: the magical island of "The Tempest" becomes the planet Altair-4, where the sky is green and the sand is pink and there are two moons. The magician Prospero becomes the mad scientist Morbius (Walter Pidgeon); Prospero's daughter Miranda, who knows no man except her father, is Altaira (Anne Francis); and (though this is less clear) the sprite Ariel becomes Robby, the friendly robot. Caliban has become a marvellously flamboyant monster out of Freud—pure id. It's a pity the film, directed by Fred Wilcox, didn't lift some of Shakespeare's dialogue; the language is flat. (Regency; Sept. 2-4.)

The Frisco Kid—Gene Wilder, as a nubile Polish rabbi, and Robert Aldrich, the director, seem to have been set loose in the Wild West with no more to guide them than a bright idea and Wilder's angelic blue eyes. (7/16/79) (Embassy 72nd St., and Embassy. . . . ¶ Gramercy; through Aug. 30.)

Goin' South—Jack Nicholson directed and plays a cackling, scratching, horny, mangy slob in this barnyard comedy set in the Old West. He's about to be strung up, but the Texas border town he's in has an unusual ordinance: a condemned outlaw can escape the noose if a woman of property agrees to marry him. A virginal young Miss Muffet type (Mary Steenburgen), who needs a man to work her gold mine, claims him, and the film is about their squabblings and misunderstandings until they find love—it's a mixture of "Blazing Saddles" and "The African Queen." Nicholson's prankish performance dominates the movie, and because his prankishness also comes out in the casting and the directing, the movie hasn't any stabilizing force; there's nothing to balance what he's doing—no one with a straitjacket. An actor-director who prances about the screen manically can easily fool himself into thinking that his film is jumping; Nicholson jumps, all right, but the movie is inert. With Veronica Cartwright and John Belushi. (12/11/78) (St. Marks Cinema; Aug. 31-Sept. 6.)

Gold Diggers of 1935—Dick Powell is hired by Alice Brady to escort her daughter, Gloria Stuart, while Gloria's fiancé, Hugh Herbert, completes his book on snuffboxes. Guess what happens. The score is good, even though the picture is terrible—in a pleasant sort of way. Busby Berkeley, who usually only choreographed, did the direction, too, and he wasn't very skillful. (Thalia; Sept. 3. . . . ¶ Carnegie Hall Cinema; Sept. 6.)

The Great McGinty (1940)—After writing a series of successful pictures, Preston Sturges offered Paramount this script (which was to win an Academy Award) for peanuts, on condition that he be allowed to direct it. Given a three-week shooting schedule and a budget of less than $350,000, he made his début as a director (thus preparing the way for other writer-directors, such as John Huston and Billy Wilder). In this satire of American political corruption, the low-life hero (Brian Donlevy) gets in solid with the local boss (Akim Tamiroff) by voting thirty-seven times in one day. He rises to be alderman, then mayor and, finally, governor, but having fallen in love, he tries to go straight, and his career is wrecked. Not up to the classic Sturges comedies that followed, partly because of Donlevy's lack of personality (the viewer can't see what would attract the competent, worldly woman—played by Muriel Angelus—who marries him) and partly because of the uneven pacing. There are wonderful patches, though, with the slapstick reversals on Horatio Alger success themes that became the Sturges specialty. With Allyn Joslyn, William Demarest, Libby Taylor, Thurston Hall, Arthur Hoyt, Steffi Duna, Esther Howard, Jimmy Conlin, Harry Rosenthal, Robert Warwick, Frank C. Moran, and Dewey Robinson; many of them were to become members of the Sturges stock company. (Thalia; Sept. 4.)

Harold and Maude (1971)—The love story of Harold (Bud Cort), almost twenty, and Maude (Ruth Gordon), almost eighty. Directed by Hal Ashby. (D. W. Griffith.)

Hold Your Man (1933)—Jean Harlow and Clark Gable, in a mixture of farce and melodrama that begins in Brooklyn and ends in jail. Anita Loos concocted some raucous bits, and Harlow goes around smacking and swatting people—she has a wonderful left. There's less fun when she shows signs of budding maidenliness and things go lofty in the women's reformatory. Sam Wood directed, and the cast includes Stuart Erwin and Dorothy Burgess. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 5.)

The In-Laws—An inspired collaboration between Alan Arkin and Peter Falk as the fathers of a prospective suburban bride and groom. Arkin is a moderately amiable dentist who gets tangled up in the machinations of a supposed C.I.A. agent, played by Falk. Script by Andrew Bergman; directed by Arthur Hiller. (7/2/79) (Quad Cinema, Guild, Loews 83rd Quad, and Embassy.)

Intermezzo (1939)—David O. Selznick, who arranged this début for Ingrid Bergman in English-speaking films, wasn't going to take any chances; it's a remake of a picture she'd already had a hit with in Sweden, in 1936. Selznick even retained the same slurpy "haunting" theme music. Leslie Howard is the wan and renowned violin virtuoso, afflicted with the boredom of fame and of domestic bliss with his beloved, understanding wife (Edna Best). He falls in love with Bergman, his daughter's piano teacher. Handsome and eager, she's a brilliant young pianist who becomes his accompanist. On a tour of the concert halls of Europe, the two combine business with passion, though at last the finer overtones of conscience separate them. The crisis occurs in a picturesque Mediterranean village—Selznick saw to it that the romantic upheavals of such artistic people got the smartest settings—and there are snacks of Brahms, Liszt, and Grieg to buoy up the cultural tone. The film's only real claim on anyone's attention was Bergman, whose natural look (full eyebrows, and even a shine on her nose) seemed revolutionary. Gregory Ratoff directed; Gregg Toland was the cinematographer. With John Halliday. (This drippy thing was remade again just a few years ago.) (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Sept. 3.)

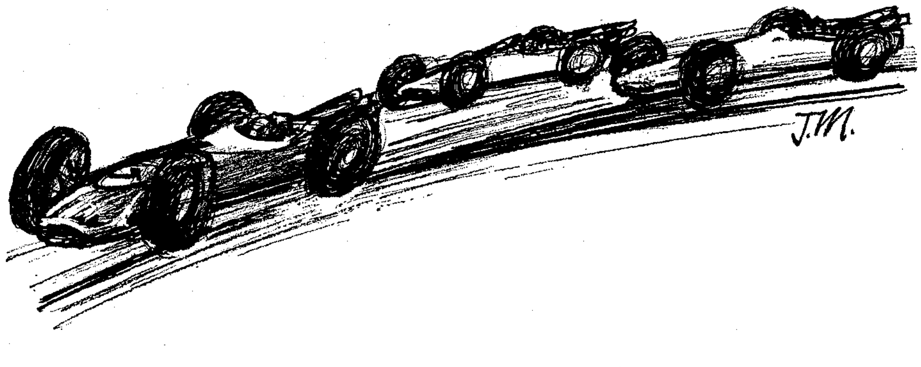
King of the Gypsies—Based on the Peter Maas book, with Sterling Hayden, Shelley Winters, Susan Sarandon, Judd Hirsch, Brooke Shields, and Eric Roberts; directed by Frank Pierson. (Olympia; Aug. 31-Sept. 6.)

Life of Brian—And now for something completely Biblical, from the troupe who did "Monty Python and the Holy Grail" (1975). Brian—played by the unhinged Graham Chapman—is an uncharismatic person who was born in Bethlehem and is unaccountably mistaken for the Messiah. The comic acting—by Chapman and by John Cleese, Terry Gilliam, Eric Idle, Terry Jones, and Michael Palin as centurions, members of the Judean People's Front, rambling prophets, listeners who cannot quite hear the Sermon on the Mount, etc.—is superb, as always. But the movie will feel a bit oversustained if you like the Python TV shows for their libertine discontinuities and perverse sense of scale. Written by the whole troupe, in Python style—intellectual but not above a blind-man sight gag. Directed by Terry Jones. (8/27/79) (Cinema I.)

Lilith (1964)—Jean Seberg is the demonic, corrupt Lilith, a patient in an elegant Maryland asylum who wants to "leave the mark of her desire on every living thing in the world;" Warren Beatty is the trainee therapist who finds her madness seductive. This high-toned, humorless attempt to create a mystic enigma was the last work of Robert Rossen, who adapted the J. P. Salamanca novel and directed; it's an unusual sort of disaster—full of symbols, chitchat about schizophrenic spiders, and exquisite cinematography (by Eugen Shuftan), and utterly lacking in energy and depth. Beatty gives his most irritating performance: he broods over each bit of dialogue for an eternity, his heavy eyelids flickering. With Peter Fonda, Kim Hunter, Gene Hackman, Jessica Walter, Anne Meacham, and René Auberjonois; the score is by Kenyon Hopkins. (Little Theatre, Public Theatre; Sept. 7.)

A Little Romance—A very, very little film about very, very little people (played by Diane Lane and Thelonious Bernard) enacting a latter-day Romeo and Juliet. Laurence Olivier lightens the general mediocrity with a performance as a debonair and blithe Frenchman who befriends the children. Directed by George Roy Hill. (5/7/79) (Quad Cinema.)

A Man for All Seasons (1966)—The director, Fred Zinnemann, places himself at the service of Robert Bolt's play about the moral tug of war between Sir Thomas More (Paul Scofield) and Henry VIII (Robert Shaw), and the results are tasteful and moderately enjoyable. The weakness is that though Bolt's dialogue is crisp, lucid, and well spoken, his presentation of More's martyrdom is so one-sided we don't even get to understand *that* side. More is the only man of honor in the movie, and he's got all the good lines; he's the kind of hero we used to read about in biographies of great men written for twelve-year-olds, and Scofield is so refined, so controlled, so dignified, so obviously "subtle" he's like a man of conscience in a school play. With Orson Welles as Wolsey and Leo Mc-



Kern as Cromwell. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Sept. 2.)

Manhattan—This black-and-white film, directed by Woody Allen, is splendidly suited to this nearly totally black-and-white city. Isaac is the skinny and festive hero of its pared-down and exuberant script, by Woody Allen and Marshall Brickman. Photographed by Gordon Willis, with a true friend for Isaac in the part played by the indispensable Diane Keaton. (4/30/79) (Gemini 1, Quad Cinema, Festival, and Loews 83rd Quad. . . . ¶ R.K.O. 86th St.; starting Aug. 31. . . . ¶ Olympia; starting Sept. 7.)

Meatballs—A summer-camp burlesque, tailgating "Animal House." Bill Murray, an ebullient but underripe comedian, plays the counsellor-in-chief. (7/16/79) (72nd Street East; through Aug. 30. . . . ¶ Victoria; through Sept. 4.)

Meetings with Remarkable Men—Reverent as can be, and the closest thing we will ever get to an official movie biography of G. I. Gurdjieff, who searched for the secret of life through a higher consciousness. (It sounds vague because it is vague.) Much mote-in-the-middle-distance acting, consulting of arcane maps, trekking across Central Asia (the movie was filmed on location in Afghanistan), and discussion of "vibrations," etc. With Dragan Maksimovic as Gurdjieff, Terence Stamp as a dilettante prince, and the bracingly virile Donald Sumpter as a young priest who seems to have the real secret of life but does not stick around long enough to impart it. Written by Jeanne de Salzmann (who was an aide to Gurdjieff) and Peter Brook, the director. (8/20/79) (Cinema 3.)

Moonraker—James Bond XI or XII, with Roger Moore vs. the metal-toothed giant Jaws (again) and a quasi-Nixonian mastermind called Drax. The glamour of the usual sex, violence, and amazing technical effects is a matter of taste. (7/9/79) (Art, 86th St. East, and National. . . . ¶ Loews 83rd Quad; through Aug. 30.)

More American Graffiti—A sequel to "American Graffiti" (1973), taking the familiar school-yearbook clucks through the sixties. Be warned: the music is dribbling and incidental, and George Lucas did not direct—B. W. L. Norton did. A visual mess, and disrespectful of its characters, too. Everything from Vietnam to light shows is treated as a series of shrunken fads, all with equal weight. With Paul Le Mat, Cindy Williams, Candy Clark, Charles Martin Smith, Mackenzie Phillips, Bo Hopkins, and Ron Howard in the roles they originated. (8/20/79) (Murray Hill, Sutton, R.K.O. 86th St., and Rivoli.)

The Muppet Movie—Kermit, Miss Piggy, Fozzie Bear, et al., travel across the country toward Hollywood, pursued by a fried-frogs'-legs entrepreneur. After some scuffles and a few songs, they make it into showbiz and become stars. (7/2/79) (Waverly, Paramount, and New Yorker. . . . ¶ U A. East; through Aug. 30.)

North Dallas Forty—A funny, lazy satire about the kind of professional football that turns its players into pieces of equipment. Nick Nolte, as a veteran with a Bad Attitude and the best hands in the game, turns in a virtuoso performance based on respiratory noises, and shows a flair for comedy. He's so cool that the movie uses him as a ready-made moral choice. Mac Davis plays the flashy quarterback. Good football, good supporting cast. Based on the novel by former Dallas Cowboy Peter Gent, and directed by Ted Kotcheff. (8/13/79) (34th St. East, Loews Orpheum, and Loews State 1.)

Notorious (1946)—Alfred Hitchcock's amatory thriller stars Ingrid Bergman as the daughter of a Nazi, a shady lady who trades secrets and all sorts of things with American agent Cary Grant. The suspense is terrific: Will suspicious, passive Grant succeed in making Bergman seduce him, or will he take over? The honor of the American male is saved by a hairbreadth, but Bergman is literally ravishing in what is probably her sexiest performance. With Claude Rains, Louis Calhern, and Madame Konstantin; script by Ben Hecht. Great trash, great fun. (Little Theatre, Public Theatre; Sept. 4.)

On the Waterfront (1954)—One of the most powerful American movies of the fifties, best in its intimate scenes (Marlon Brando courting Eva Marie Saint, Brando with his brother, Rod Steiger), worst in its attempts at dynamic Christian symbolism and in Karl Malden's big moments. Elia Kazan directed from Budd Schulberg's script. Score by Leonard Bernstein. (Harold Clurman; Sept. 5-7.)

Orchestra Rehearsal—Federico Fellini's style here is as compact and silvery as a sardine. The musicians rehearse—in a shadowed thirteenth-century church oratory with perfect acoustics—under the baton of a German conductor (Baldwin Baas) and give touching, funny interviews to Fellini (off camera) about their instruments. When they revolt against the dictatorship of the conductor, the movie turns into a political metaphor that draws a false comparison between artistic discipline and totalitarianism, but it can be skimmed for its eloquent details. Music by the late Nino Rota, who scored all of Fellini's movies from "The White Sheik" (1952) on, and to whom this one is dedicated. In Italian. (8/27/79) (Cinema II.)

Pal Joey (1957)—Blighted Hollywoodization of the musical by John O'Hara, Richard Rodgers, and Lorenz Hart, with the score purified along with Joey's character. The heel-hero has been changed from a hoofer to a crooner—in line with the talents of Frank Sinatra. His singing helps things along, and he also does the only acting, though Kim Novak's vacuity is rather touching and is certainly not as laborious as Rita Hayworth's misconceived performance. This sad botch was directed by George Sidney. (Thalia; Sept. 3.)

Pandora's Box (1929)—Louise Brooks, a great—almost impersonal—beauty who set styles in the flapper period, and whose straight hair and bangs were imitated all over the world (and were used as the model for the Dixie Dugan comic strip), left Hollywood in 1928 at the height of her career and went to Germany for the role of a lifetime. G. W. Pabst had selected her to play Lulu in this film, adapted from the Wedekind plays "Erdgeist" and "Die Buchse der Pandora" (the same source material that Alban Berg used for his opera "Lulu"). Pabst, one of the giants of the screen, is perhaps most famous for his treatment of sex, violence, and abnormal psychology, and Wedekind's sex tragedy provided startling material. Lulu is the sexually insatiable female, the archetype of voracious, destructive woman. She has no moral sense and no interests beyond sensuality; when a man is exhausted, she leaves him. The film is episodic; it's in an expressionist style, with rapid cutting and surprising kinds of visual tension. With Fritz Kortner as Dr. Schon, Francis Lederer as his son, Alice Roberts as the lesbian Countess Geschwitz, and Gustav Diesel as Jack the Ripper. In German. (Bleecker St. Cinema; Sept. 6.)

The Passion of Joan of Arc (1927)—One of the few truly great films. Carl Dreyer based the script on the trial records and, keeping the camera close to the fleshly faces of Joan and her persecutors, subtly—and shockingly—links eroticism and religious persecution. Maria Falconetti's Joan may be the finest performance ever recorded on film. With Antonin Artaud. (Harold Clurman; through Aug. 31.)

Peppermint Soda—Adolescence from a woman's point of view. The film is an account of the minor adventures of two French girls, thirteen and fifteen, acted just right by Eleonore Klarwein and Odile Michel. Written and directed with confidence and precision by Diane Kurys. In French. (7/30/79) (Loews Tower East, and 57th St. Playhouse.)

The Power and the Glory (1933)—Preston Sturges wrote the script (which is sentimental and heavy-handed but is nevertheless almost a warmup for "Citizen Kane"), and the producer, Jesse Lasky, who considered it "the most perfect script" he'd ever seen, insisted that the director, William K. Howard, shoot it word for word. Spencer Tracy is the railroad tycoon who has killed himself, and the story is told from his funeral by Ralph Morgan. With Colleen Moore and slinky Helen Vinson. Photographed by James Wong Howe. (Thalia; Sept. 4.)

Practically Yours (1945)—Fred MacMurray, a presumably doomed aviator in the Pacific, broadcasts a last message to the other members of his combat group. "I wish I could walk with Peggy through Central Park again and kiss the tip of her nose," he says. His friends naturally assume that he is talking about a girl, although the Peggy he has in mind is a little dog (with a passionate disposition). Norman Krasna wrote this comedy of confusion in his usual pushy madcap style; when MacMurray gets back, he finds he is engaged to Claudette Colbert, who's a com-

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plete stranger to him. There's one funny sequence with a self-inflating boat inflating in the subway. Mitchell Leisen directed; with Robert Benchley, Cecil Kellaway, Gil Lamb, Rosemary DeCamp, and Tom Powers. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 4.)

La Prisonnière (1969)—Henri-Georges Clouzot, of "The Wages of Fear," wrote and directed this story about sadomasochism, set in a Paris of frighteningly offhand lovers and phenomenally successful Op Art. A very brilliant, erotic film that takes the risk that some might laugh at it; it stares you out. In French. (Thalia; Sept. 6.)

Rabbit Test (1978)—With Billy Crystal, directed by Joan Rivers. (Olympia; starting Sept. 7.)

Rich Kids—With Trini Alvarado and Jeremy Levy, directed by Robert M. Young. (Baronet.)

Rocky II—As the ads say, "the story continues . . ." Practically repeats itself, in fact. Rocky Balboa retires from boxing after going the distance against the heavyweight champion, marries, becomes a father, loses a couple of jobs, and, finally, agrees to a rematch with Apollo Creed. Sylvester Stallone is the writer, director, and star, and he seems to be the best man for the jobs. Same basic cast: Talia Shire, Burgess Meredith, Burt Young, and Carl Weathers. Same location (Philadelphia). Different ending. "Rocky III" is in the works. (7/2/79) (Loews New York 1, and R.K.O. Cinerama 1. . . . ¶ Greenwich; starting Aug. 31.)

Rust Never Sleeps—A documentary about Neil Young. (8th St. Playhouse. . . . ¶ R.K.O. 86th St.; through Aug. 30.)

Same Time, Next Year—A tepid, sweet meal. Genteel lifelong adultery by two ciphers, played by Ellen Burstyn and Alan Alda. The time span is from 1951 to 1977. The gimmick is the way that social changes and fashions in dress and ideas are reflected in these two, and the single joke is that adultery can be regulated and celebrated, just like marriage. Of course it can be, if you remove every ounce of passion and sexual tension from it, which is what the writer, Bernard Slade, and the director, Robert Mulligan, have done. If someone you make the mistake of caring about insists on your going to this movie, take a small flashlight and a book. From Slade's two-character one-set Broadway hit. (12/4/78) (St. Marks Cinema; through Aug. 30.)

The Scarlet Empress (1934)—Josef von Sternberg turned the story of Catherine the Great into what he himself called a "relentless excursion into style;" the décor and the visual motifs became the stars, and Marlene Dietrich was used as a camera subject instead of as a person. She's photographed behind veils and fishnets, while dwarfs slither about and bells ring and everybody tries to look degenerate. Von Sternberg had a peculiar notion that all this showy pomposity proved that film was an art medium. The picture is egocentric and empty of drama, yet it has the fascination (and the tediousness) that bizarre, obsessional movies often have. Sam Jaffe, in a fright wig and smiling like a death's-head, plays mad, crippled Peter; Dietrich's daughter, Maria Sieber, appears in the opening scenes as the young Catherine; John Lodge, with dashing long hair and a mustache, swaggers about in furs. With Louise Dresser, strangely folksy as the old Empress, and Jane Darwell, Gavin Gordon, and C. Aubrey Smith. (Bleecker St. Cinema; Sept. 6.)

The Seduction of Joe Tynan—An airless, pious study of political corruption (which, it is suggested, goes hand in hand with sleeping with Meryl Streep). The obvious is spelled out, and the interesting processes remain vague. Alan Alda, as Tynan, a young liberal senator, has a tight face and tinny voice that do not express the changes taking place inside the character. Streep and Barbara Harris provide delicious moments, and Melvyn Douglas, as an aging Southern senator, rises above the platitudes around him with touching dignity. Rip Torn is on hand for one of his madman turns, but the movie's schematic respectability domesticates him. Directed by Jerry Schatzberg. (8/20/79) (Bay Cinema, Gemini 2, Trans-Lux 85th St., and Little Carnegie.)

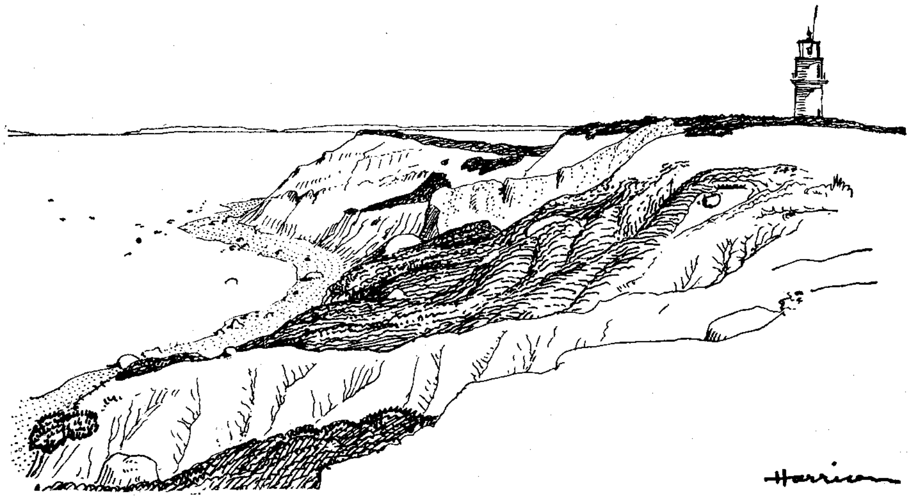
Soldier of Orange—With Rutger Hauer, Jeroen Krabbé, and Belinda Meuldijk; directed by Paul Verhoeven. In Dutch and English. (Beekman.)

Star Wars (1977)—Written and directed by George Lucas (of "American Graffiti"), the movie is about an interstellar war in a galaxy inhabited by tiny, chattering, evil beings, by Tenniel creatures of high individuality (a henna-dyed wolf-man, snakes with the look of mathematicians), by a gold-plated robot, and by a computer that looks like a mixture of hair-dryer and mailbox. (The two last trudge across what is actually the Tunisian desert bickering inseparably, like man and wife in Beckett.) Witty and fun, with spectacular optical effects. (Loews New York 2, and Loews Astor Plaza.)

The Strange One (1957)—With Ben Gazzara, Pat Hingle, and Arthur Storch; directed by Jack Garfein. (Harold Clurman; starting Sept. 8.)

Suddenly, Last Summer (1959)—One of Tennessee Williams' feverous fantasies, padded out by Joseph L. Mankiewicz, the director, and by Williams and Gore Vidal, who did the screenplay. They should never have allowed the audience so much time to think about what's going on: the short play turns into a ludicrous, lumbering horror movie. Katharine Hepburn is rather amusing as the Southern-belle dragon lady whose homosexual poet-son, Sebastian, was killed and partly eaten by the North African boys he'd preyed upon. Elizabeth Taylor is her distraught niece, whom she's trying to get lobotomized so that the girl won't be able to tell the story. Taylor works hard at her big monologue, trying to give us the shudders, but Mankiewicz has delayed her revelations too long. Montgomery Clift, in possibly his worst performance, is the dim-witted neurosurgeon who can't seem to get anything into his eminent head. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Sept. 4.)

The Sugarland Express (1974)—Lou Jean (Goldie Hawn) and her husband (William Atherton), who have lost custody of their infant son, try to get him back by taking a highway-patrol officer (Michael Sacks) hostage. The picture is commercial and shallow, yet its director, Steven Spielberg, who was then in his twenties, is a wizard at action sequences, and this film is one of the most phenomenal début films in the history of movies. (Cinema Village; Sept. 2-3.)



Sunburn—With Farrah Fawcett, Charles Grodin, and Art Carney; directed by Richard C. Sarafian. (Eastside Cinema, and Embassy 1.)

El Super—A modest, non-polemical film about the adaptation of a small group of Cuban expatriates to life in New York. The main character is Roberto, a building superintendent beset by cold weather, the English language, and middle age, who decides to move with his wife and daughter to Miami. Directed by Léon Ichaso and Orlando Jiménez-Leal, and based on a play by Ivan Acosta. Roberto is played by Raymundo Hidalgo-Gato. In Spanish. (7/23/79) (Gramercy; starting Aug. 31.)

Till Marriage Do Us Part—With Laura Antonelli, directed by Luigi Comencini. In Italian. (Plaza.)

The Tree of Wooden Clogs—A touching account by Ermanno Olmi of life among the Italian peasantry in the late nineteenth century. The people who work the land can never own it, and they are as much at the mercy of time and weather as the dumb creatures with whom they share their living quarters and their fates. In Italian. (6/18/79) (Cinema Studio 2.)

Two for the Road (1967)—Glossy comedy by Stanley Donen about two lovers, though not about love, which isn't in his range. Frederic Raphael did the competent but unfelt screenplay, and the cast includes Audrey Hepburn and Albert Finney. Finney looks as if he is in a role too tight for him. (Little Theatre, Public Theatre; Sept. 8.)

Viva Italia! (1978)—An Italian anthology film in which at least four of the nine sketches are really fine, including a recklessly funny kitchen story of regional cooking gone berserk and a poignant piece about a hypocritical son luring his mother into an old-age home. The film stars Vittorio Gassman and Alberto Sordi, and was directed by Mario Monicelli, Ettore Scola, and Dino Risi. In Italian. (7/17/78) (Cinema Village; Sept. 4.)

Weekend in Havana (1941)—Probably the cheerfullest weekend in Havana's history, what with Carmen Miranda, Alice Faye, John Payne, Cesar Romero, Leonid Kinskey, George Barbier, and everybody else on the Fox lot beaming with fatuous good will. Carmen Miranda wears a headgear of grapefruit, grapes, apples, oranges, bananas, lemons, pineapples, and an occasional small plum. Walter Lang directed; Hermes Pan did the choreography. The songs (mostly by Harry Warren and Mark Gordon) are not top drawer. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 2-3.)

Why Not!—A beautifully generous, funny, emotionally detailed view of a three-sided love affair. Sami Frey, Mario Gonzalez, and Christine Murillo are the decent, loving three; Nicole Jamet has to decide whether to make it four. Written and directed by Coline Serreau, with the same sense of proportion the characters have about themselves; in her world, the uglier forms of unhappiness are becoming impossible. In French. (8/6/79) (Paris.)

Wifemistress—With Marcello Mastroianni and Laura Antonelli, directed by Marco Vicario. In Italian. (Greenwich; through Aug. 30.)

Woman of the Year (1942)—The first of the films co-starring Katharine Hepburn and Spencer Tracy. The chemistry is great but the plot and the tone are wobbly. He's a sportswriter, and she's a celebrated political journalist (probably modelled on Dorothy Thompson) who doesn't know how to be a woman. The comedy goes sour whenever the movie scores points against her, and the slapstick resolution has an air of desperation. George Stevens directed, from a script by Ring Lardner, Jr., and Michael Kanin. With Fay Bainter, Reginald Owen, and William Bendix. (Little Theatre, Public Theatre; Sept. 5.)

Woyzeck—With Klaus Kinski and Eva Mattes, directed by Werner Herzog. In German. (Quad Cinema, and Cinema Studio 1.)

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

A FRIEND writes:

Here are places I have taken my children in the past: Empire State Building; Statue of Liberty; Bronx Zoo; Museum of Natural History; Aquarium; drag strips; rock concerts; folk festivals; dirt-bike motorcycle races; airplane rides; America's Cup trials; stock-car races; surfing; amusement parks; Montana; World's Fair; bowling; Burger King. (This is a partial list.) They are older now, and this past weekend four of them (in their twenties) wanted to go to Carly Simon's night club on Martha's Vineyard. They were scattered around, so after we found out that the car ferry at Woods Hole had been booked for months we agreed to meet at the Hyannis ferry, Saturday P.M. One of them would arrange motel, one get tickets for night club. No problem. (I used to have to handle everything.) Big reunion on dock at 3 P.M. Both had failed. One reported no lodging on M. Vineyard available. The other had obtained tickets for Carly's; however, a friend was holding them on the island. How to get there? Where to stay? Prospect bleak. We discussed jettisoning entire project. Pondered sightseeing around Cape Cod. Consensus was Cape Cod would be anticlimactic bummer. Walked along the docks, brooding. Suddenly noted a handsome boat for charter. Youthful captain said he'd take us to M.V., and we could sleep aboard. He had to be back Sunday noon, however. (Every Sunday, he takes a ninety-three-year-old woman out for short cruise, he explained, accompanied by a maid and by a butler, who serves lunch.) We examined the craft. Great-looking. Lots of teak. Forty-eight feet; twin diesels; crew of three; sleeping accommodations for six. Tempting solution to our problem. We weighed economic factors. Children voted to dismiss economic factors. We picked up some ships' stores in a deli and got aboard. Cast off, twin diesels rumbling. Tooled out through harbor; gunned it into Sound. Huge wake tumbling behind. Rain falling. Lolled around spacious cabin, eating ham-and-cheese sandwiches and drinking beer. Ventured onto deck, waved to passing cruisers as social equals. Maximum hedonistic fulfillment, plus hilarity. Cape Cod receded; M.V. came into view. Where to land? Preferably near C. Simon's night club. Captain opted for Oak Bluffs. All the same to us. Tied up. Downpour. Need for wheels now. Car-rental place on dock. Ran through rain and managed to get car for ten bucks flat. Gratifying sense of economy. Drove around trying to find house with person in it who had C. Simon tickets. Vineyard is small until you get lost. Then enormous. Back roads; open fields; lot of nothing. Finally located ticket holder. On to Edgartown. Very picturesque as seen through windshield wipers. Cobblestones. Debarked at a deli to dine. Prosciutto on roll; grape soda. Then asked cop how to get to Carly's. Turn left, go two blocks, turn right, go here, there, etc. Lost again. Darkness. Emptiness. Voted on how far to go down certain road before turning back. Turned back. Asked some people who were walking in rain. They said we were correct the first time: just keep going to airport. We turned around again, drove to airport. Where was night club? Got out and asked. It was nearby but unmarked. This kind of tasteful understatement not welcome on dark, rainy night. Finally found it. Went in. Large, pleasant; décor was palm-tree Deco, more or less. Good music; lots of dancing. Where was Carly? Apparently at somebody else's night club. Gave up on Carly. Back in car by midnight; drove to Oak Bluffs. Acquired more ham-and-cheese sandwiches; returned to boat. Rain was heavy, but we were cozy, warm, content. Climbed into our bunks presently; reflected on splendor of life; listened to waves sloshing against hull, raindrops pattering above. Untroubled sleep followed.

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Everything Cool

YOSHIAKI MASUO, a well-known jazz guitarist in Japan who moved to New York City in 1971 and has established himself as a successful musician here, and who is an acquaintance of ours, told us not long ago that there are almost three dozen well-known Japanese jazz musicians currently living in New York but that many of them have had to accept full-time employment as sushi-cutters, waiters, or busboys at various Japanese restaurants in town, and have been able to work only rarely as musicians. Masuo's friend Motohiko Hino, who was recognized as an outstanding jazz drummer in Japan, has found himself in this predicament. Since Hino's arrival in New York, eight months ago, he has worked six days a week at the Mita Restaurant, in downtown Manhattan, and has spent evenings practicing or else searching for a chance to play drums professionally. On Sunday afternoons, Hino gets together with Masuo at Masuo's apartment, and they talk and rehearse. We learned all this one recent Sunday when Masuo called up and invited us to come over and meet Hino. "You know, I think Motohiko Hino is the No. 1 drummer in Japan, but here he is mostly a busboy," Masuo said. "He got a lot to say. You come over later, man."

When we arrived at Masuo's apartment, which is a modest one-bedroom place in SoHo, we were greeted at the door by his wife, Shirley—a soft-voiced, petite young American who speaks fluent Japanese. She led us into the living room, where Masuo and another young man were watching pre-season football on TV. “They think it is like American sumo,” Shirley Masuo said confidentially.

Masuo stood up to greet us. He is a delicate-looking young man in his early thirties, with long, straight hair. Shirley Masuo introduced us to Motohiko Hino, first in English and then in Japanese. Hino, who is a few years older than Masuo and has a pencil-thin mustache, was wearing a navy-blue Mersey cap, cocked back, the way the nineteen-sixties British mods used to wear them; pink-tinted sunglasses; a Western shirt; and bluejeans. He shook hands rather tentatively. “Sorry, not speak good English,” he said, with an apologetic shrug. Then he lit a cigarette with a sleek-looking black lighter that ticked like a metronome while he was using it. “Made in Japan,” he said, admiring the ticking lighter. “*Very* new.” He looked at Masuo and laughed—a high-pitched, hiccupy laugh.

“We try to make him speak English,” Masuo said. “It’s very important. Language is his main problem. Making a living is hard, because he cannot speak English. He gets only two or three club dates a month—mostly with his older brother Terumasa, who is a trumpet player. Motohiko must be at the restaurant all day, and at home he has a Japanese wife and child, so he is talking Japanese all the time.”

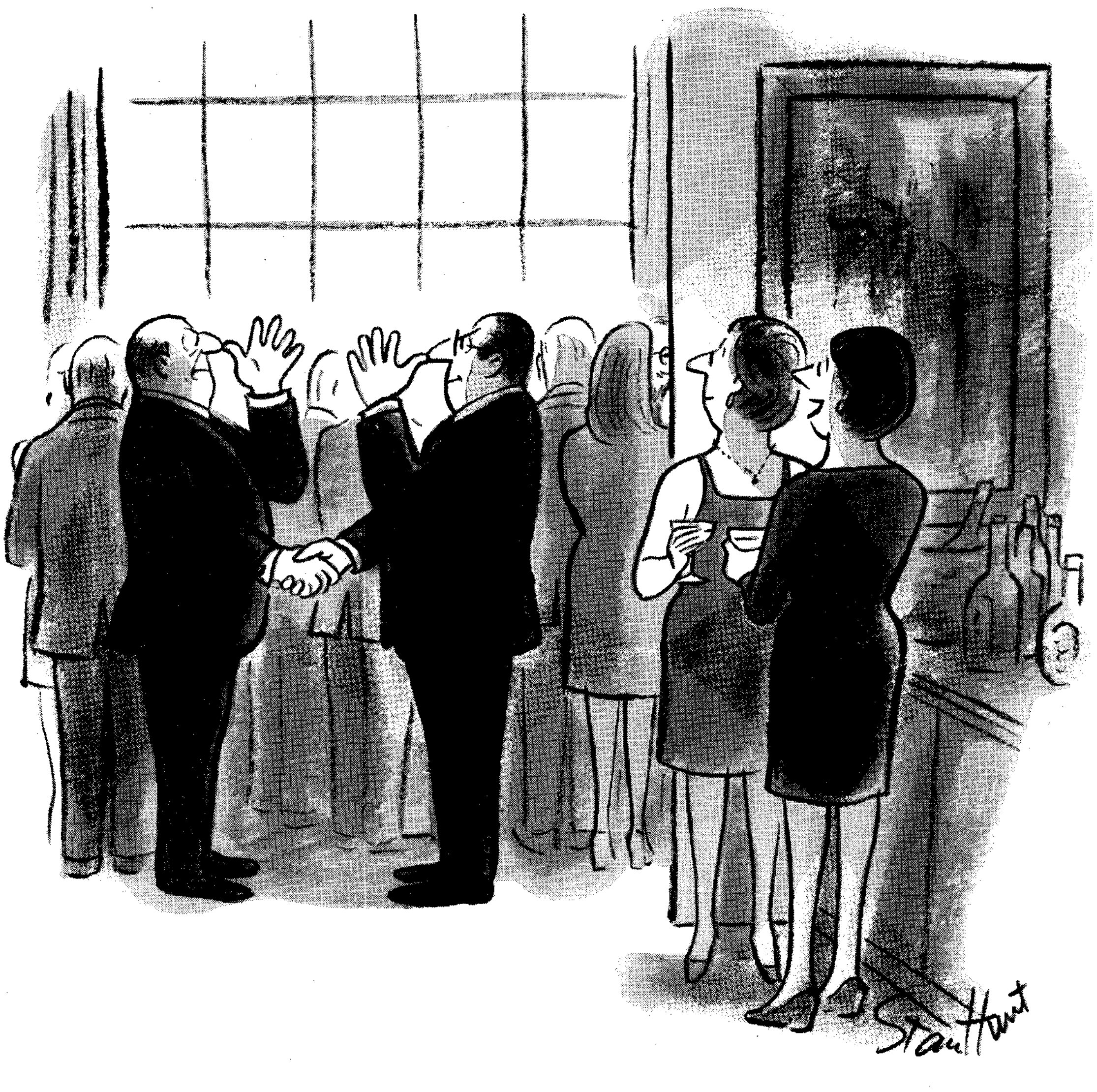
Masuo translated these remarks for Hino, and Hino nodded vehemently. “Speak English. Speak English,” he sang, and he puffed hard on his cigarette. He and Masuo broke into laughter, and then spoke for a while in Japanese before Masuo turned back to us.

“When he first came here, he says, he didn’t want to seek out Japanese people,” Masuo said. “He looked for American musicians. In Japan, he played with some American musicians who were really big there—even made records with some of them. He felt that those contacts would be of assistance here, but he found out these players weren’t so big in New York. Then he met a Japanese musician friend at a restaurant, and after that he met me. Now he’s seeing more Japanese people. He didn’t want to just hang out with some American musicians who’d smoke pot with him and then split. But he says he feels good here. The best musicians are here. The best *everything* is here. It makes him more creative. When he stands on the street and sees that there is no set way to greet people, he feels the freedom here. He says he feels better here even though he is less comfortable and less popular than he was in Japan.”

Hino smiled at us. “Everything cool,” he said.

Shirley Masuo came in from the kitchen carrying a low table on which were plates of ham, cheese, and Italian bread, sliced and organized into rows of small bits, with dessert bowls containing butter, jam, and mayonnaise and neatly fitted into the spaces between the plates.

“I think it is going to take five to ten years for Japanese musicians to break into the scene,” Masuo continued. “When I came in 1971, I knew of only one Japanese jazz musician here—Teruo Nakamura, a bass player. Now there are many. You see, Japan is a small island, and everything that is popular there becomes a fashion. Tokyo is big, like New York, but it is not international and the people there are not individual. The music is like that, too. Here Japanese are a minority. This is a good thing. I cannot show my weak points, I must play well, because people already look at me funny when I am on the bandstand. This is New York, and you gotta be in shape all the time.”



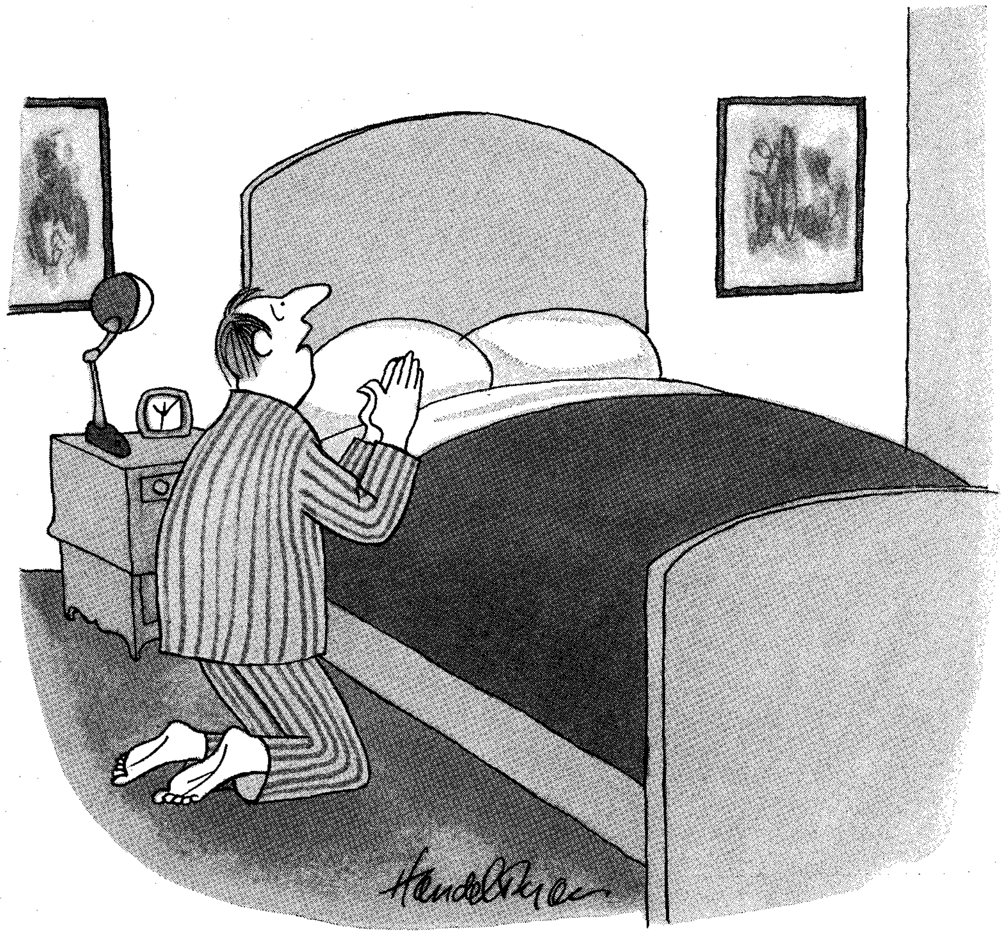
“Oh, good. Apparently Dr. Sturgeon and Dr. Winestaff have agreed to disagree.”

Masuo went on to say that there was a time in the not so distant past when, like other Japanese jazz musicians, he could find regular work only at a club called Barbara’s, in the West Village. Barbara’s had begun by experimenting with Japanese musicians, then had hired a Japanese chef, and had soon attracted a Japanese audience, Masuo recalled. Hino nodded. “Motohiko didn’t like playing there so much,” said Masuo. “He told me there were times at Barbara’s when he felt as if he was in Japan again." He added that Barbara's had recently gone out of business.

After a pause, Masuo said, "You ought to ask Ryo Kawasaki how tough it is just *being* a musician. He is also a guitarist, and is very popular, but he is having a hard time now, because he's doing his own music." He suggested that while he and Hino rehearsed we ourself might visit Kawasaki, who had just moved into a loft on lower Broadway. Shirley Masuo volunteered to telephone ahead.

Kawasaki was in the process of installing a sink in his loft when we arrived at his door, which was at the end of a long and littered hallway. His loft had been temporarily sectioned off so that the seating area was just across from the entrance. Slightly to its left, Kawasaki had set up his rehearsal space: three guitars rested against an exposed-brick wall, next to several small amplifiers and a small Oriental rug, which was spotless. The bedroom and kitchen and bathroom areas were behind a curtain. Kawasaki excused himself to prepare jasmine tea, which he served in little bowls, and then he sat down with us on a sofa. He has round, somewhat sad eyes; long hair, which he wears tucked behind his ears; and a mustache. His manner was quiet, but he spoke firmly. "I never concerned myself with being particularly Japanese," he told us. "I'm a musician, a guitar player. Even if you can't speak the language, jazz musicians have a much more mature *musical* vocabulary. They understand how you *play*. This is the reason to come to New York—the music. In Japan, I'd never be in bad shape financially. Before I came to the United States, I had two cars, and roadies to carry my equipment. I was doing quite all right. But that's not what I was looking for. I wanted to be an internationally accepted musician, doing, I hoped, my own music. As long as I played with Elvin Jones or Gil Evans or Chico Hamilton, I was kept busy here, from the time I came, in 1973. But after I left Elvin and decided to do my own music I discovered that clubs are booked three months in advance, and you have to play all these games with club owners, and then when you do get a gig the money's not great. Stuff I never had to think about as a sideman. So now I've been booked one week out of the last three months, which is not bad exposure but is no money."

Kawasaki took a long sip of tea. "Still, being here is a lot of fun," he said. "Fixing this loft is a lot of fun for me—I feel I'm really here, evolving and learning. I had a two-bedroom apartment in the Manhattan Plaza artists' housing, where I lived in comfort. They had a swimming pool, too, and I only paid ninety dollars a month. In a way, it made me feel cool. It made me feel a little laid back, established. Actually, I hated it. Look at this." He waved a hand around at his loft. "Here there is no real bathroom, no real kitchen, and I pay almost three times as much. I love it."



"Possibly due to a technical error, I seem to be getting someone else's comeuppance."

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Pumping Pedals

FOR some time, bicycle riders have been acting together in an effort to obtain a fair share of New York City's streets. One of their first accomplishments came in the summer of 1966, when automobile traffic was banned from the East and West Drives in Central Park at certain hours, on an experimental basis, so that bicyclists and other nondrivers could have road space free from the hazards posed by cars. After that experiment proved successful—despite strong resistance from the taxi industry—the hours when cars were kept from the Park's drives were gradually extended. This year, between May 1st and October 31st bicyclists, runners, walkers, roller skaters, and skateboarders have had and will have the Park pretty much to themselves not only on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays but, except for rush hours, on weekdays as well. (The rest of the year, cars are banned from the Park's drives just on weekends and holidays.) In 1973, an organization called Transportation Alternatives was formed here, to further responsible substitutes for the automobile. Among the changes that Transportation Alternatives has helped bring about is the establishment of a four-foot-wide bike lane running down Broadway and up Sixth Avenue between Fifty-ninth Street and Eighth Street, which opened last year, and a bike lane on the Queensboro Bridge, which opened this past July.

The other afternoon, Transportation Alternatives, which now has more than two thousand members, held a Rally for a Car-Free Central Park. The rally started at five-thirty at Sixtieth Street and Fifth Avenue, and we went up to take a look. It was a cool, autumnal day, and the tall stainless-steel Dubuffet sculpture that is temporarily on display at the entrance to the Park just north of the Plaza gleamed in the late-afternoon sun. Not far from the sculpture, people were assembling with their bicycles. Some of them had attached placards to their bikes bearing messages like “NON-POLLUTER COMMUTER,” “I SHARE THE ROAD WITH CARS—WISH THEY’D SHARE BACK,” and “PUMP PEDALS, NOT GAS.” While the cyclists were getting ready for a ride through the Park, we spoke with Larry Reilly, who is the vice-president of Transportation Alternatives. He is a tall, red-haired man with a red mustache, and as he stood straddling his bike, a ten-speed Zieleman, he told us that the group was trying to get the Parks Department to set aside one lane of each of the Park’s drives for nonmotorized use on a permanent basis. Eventually, he said, the group would like to see automobiles banned from Central Park altogether, but since that seemed to be a distant goal, he and his fellow-cyclists were going to ride up the left lane of the East Drive en masse during the rush hour in order to symbolize their more immediate one.

“Till now, T.A.’s main emphasis has been on bicycles, but only because that’s where our expertise is,” he said. “Now we’ve begun to coördinate our policies more and more with those of runners and others who want to use the city’s streets without having to cope with cars. We’re also very much into mixed modes of transportation, and making it easy and safe to switch from one form of transportation to another. For example, we’re pushing for better bike-storage racks at train and bus terminals. And we’d like to see bicycle racks built onto the back of buses. I understand that that sort of thing has been done successfully on the West Coast. So far, we’ve had a lot of coöperation from the city’s Department of Transportation and also from Parks Commissioner Gordon Davis. And there’s a lot of federal money available for improving bicycle transportation all over the country, if communities would only put it to use.”

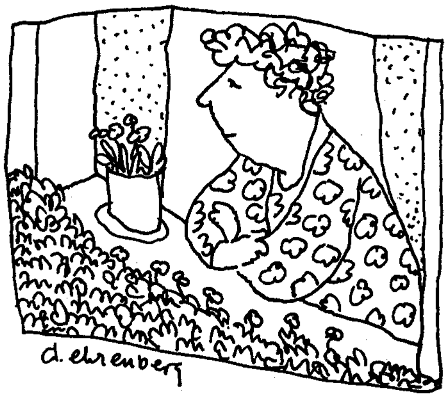
By this time, about a hundred of the demonstrators were chanting, “No more cars!” A number of roller skaters had turned up, and they were gliding around the edge of the crowd, as were a few kids who had arrived with skateboards. In the midst of the crowd we spotted a man wearing a red T-shirt printed with the words “LE MONDE À BICYCLETTE.”

As the demonstrators prepared to move up the East Drive, we fell into conversation with a boy who told us that his name was Patrick Murphy, that he was sixteen, that he lived in Queens, that he played on the Bayside football team, that he had a summer job in Manhattan, and that he cycled in to work and back three or four times a week. “It’s a round trip of about thirty miles, and I do it even though I don’t really *have* to do it,” he said.

Father Flye

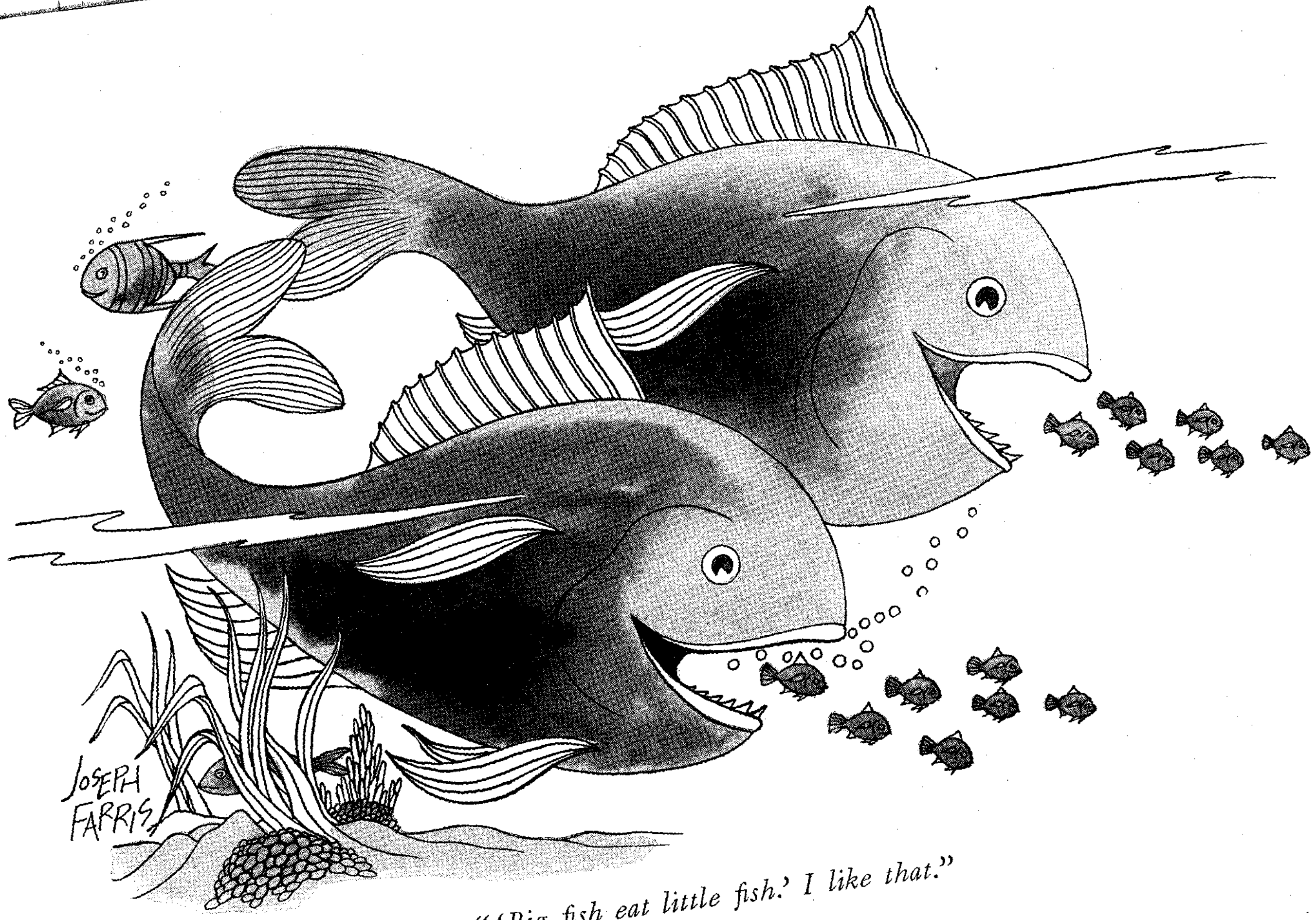
Father James Harold Flye lives in a house adjoining the church of St. Luke in the Fields, on Hudson Street. He’s possibly best known as a correspondent of James Agee (the introduction to a French edition of Agee’s “A Death in the Family” describes him as *“le père Flye, le pasteur épiscopalien qui fut l’ami et le confidant d’Agee”*), and most would place him at St. Andrew’s School, on the Cumberland plateau, two miles from Sewanee, Tennessee, where he met Agee, and where he taught for thirty-six years. The fact is that Father Flye left St. Andrew’s a quarter century ago. Even before that, in the early forties, he began spending summers on duty at St. Luke’s, and, except for four years in Wichita, a year in Omaha, and an odd summer in Europe, his relations with St. Luke’s have been regular ever since. Father Flye still celebrates Mass every Friday morning at seven-thirty, and he maintains an informal ministry in his nook in the church’s house. We’ve taken advantage of his hospitality there for several years.

On a recent visit, we received a buoyant welcome, as usual. Father Flye is a small, modest man, kind and quiet and full of thoughts, yet he hums with an energy that belies his stoop and shuffle. Once in place to talk—often, most comfortably, on a cushioned desk chair—he is a lively host, inquiring about books read, work in progress, and general well-being. He prefers not to account for his own activities, because he doesn’t think highly of them. He will admit that he reads and, when he “has it right” (as he did in “An Article of Faith,” reprinted in the *Harvard Advocate* collection “First Flowering”), he writes. He claims to “spend a lot of time rummaging,” and we have seen why—his quarters are a record of a bountiful past. A couch is papered with fresh and yellowed news clips; Nabisco cartons and wicker boxes brim with letters posted to him as early as 1899. His desk top holds tools of his underplayed trade (a Remington Easy-Riter, for instance) and also what Father Flye calls “scratchings.” These are random notes and queries penned in black ink which reflect conviction, doubt, and a lighter turn of mind. “ ‘Intolerance’—Is one religion as good as another?” “Death Penalty: a moral standard based on what?” *“Combien sont ces six saucissons-ci? Ces six saucissons-ci sont six sous.”* Father Flye recited the last in a sibilant rush. Then he sighed in delight and said “Oh, French!” and “Goodness gracious!”—laughing almost as irrepressibly as he had laughed when, on an earlier visit, we ventured to ask his age. Then he had pretended to do some figuring and had announced, in a surprised tone, “Ninety-four. You know, I’m incredibly old!”



The first two scratchings suggest Father Flye’s pensive side, which he shared in a conversation about two books on a table next to his reading chair. “ ‘Lives of a Cell,’ by Dr. Lewis Thomas, I read hospitably, although I don’t think I’ve read a book with so many words I didn’t know. Oh, the mystery with which we’re faced! How in the world did those two gases oxygen and nitrogen get together to be breathed by human beings? How in the world could life come out in the tiniest cell? I have a continuing sense of wonder and amazement. One can think of processes, but back of it all? If one thinks of the Big Bang that Carl Sagan writes about in ‘The Dragons of Eden,’ what was it that banged? If one contemplates matter itself, one is faced with the dilemma that one can’t think of matter as having or not having a beginning. Just thinking about these things, I’m floored. I don’t mean to preach. I can’t conceive of life as always being here. On the other hand, I can’t conceive of its beginning.”

On the other side of Father Flye’s reading chair were piled five books of worship: a 1928 edition of the “Missel Quotidien et Vespéral,” in French; 1945 and 1977 editions of “The Book of Common Prayer;” a 1946 edition of “The People’s Anglican Missal;” and an undated King James version of the Bible. Faithful to his vocation, Father Flye reads prayers morning and evening and chants Biblical chapters



"'Big fish eat little fish.' I like that."

from among sixty or so he knows by heart. Weighty talk about the Bible and its many versions triggered his memory of a bit of doggerel from W. H. Auden:

The Book of Common Prayer we knew
Was that of 1662:
Though with-it sermons may be well,
Liturgical reforms are hell.

He scraped his shoes on the floor as if to get traction in the verse. At other moments, he snapped his fingers in excitement, arched his brows expressively, wrinkled his long face in gravity or merriment.

Musing on the Bible led him further: "The way people read aloud doesn't always accord with my tastes. In Matthew, Chapter 5, comes the Sermon on the Mount. I recently heard someone read it as if the word 'saying' had no comma in front of it. In fact, I think 'saying' should be the first word of the next verse. Here it is: 'And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: And he opened his mouth, and taught them—*saying* . . .' You see, there should be a pause there. Here's another one. I don't know if this is a Biblical quotation, but it makes a point. 'And he said, "Saddle me an ass." And they *saddled* him.' Now listen to it: 'And he said, "Saddle me an ass." And they saddled *him*.'" Father Flye slapped his leg in glee at the change in meaning caused by the shift in emphasis. He leaned toward us to see if we understood, repeating "Yes, yes, yes?" in a breathless tenor.

When Father Flye graduated from Yale, in 1910, he committed himself to education. "I'd had a great American education, and I wanted to be in it," he explained to us, adding, "I hadn't the slightest thought of becoming a clergyman." Within five years, he had combined his convictions about "the heritage of civilization" and "the organic historic continuity of the Church" as a teacher and a priest: "I discovered I had a vocation."

The memorabilia at St. Luke's reflect his twin interests. Nestled in a corner of a bookcase stands a photograph of students in front of a one-room schoolhouse in Florida where Father Flye taught during the first years of the century. On the wall above his desk hang a bottle from Lourdes, which holds holy water, and a scroll on which the Apostles' Creed is written in the vertical strokes of Korean. Reminders of friendships made at schools and churches are scattered through the room. A rough-hewn pedal exercise machine called the Greenmeadow Runner sits behind Father Flye's reading chair. It was a gift from its inventor, a man named John Stroop, now in his seventies, who was a St. Andrew's schoolboy and, later, was Father Flye's host on Jane Street—"four doors down from the house where Alexander Hamilton died after the duel with Burr"—when he first came to New York to stay full time, in 1959. A second desk holds books and papers from Harvey Simmonds, a friend who also went to St. Andrew's. A cabinet at the end of the room houses many of Father Flye's treasured books, including a full set of James Agee's criticism, poetry, and prose, and books by two other admired authors—William Alexander Percy and Phyllis McGinley.

Father Flye asked rhetorically, "You know some of Phyllis McGinley's poetry? This will do for a start." Before beginning to recite, he said, "You can always depend on her facts." Precise, spritelike, a full range of emotion playing in his gray eyes, Father Flye gave samples of her verses on saints, near-saints, and family affairs. Then, turning to the subject of the city where he once roamed happily among concerts, libraries, museums, and a circle of friends, and where he still nourishes the friends, Father Flye recited McGinley's "A Kind of Love Letter to New York," which ends:

Ah! some love Paris,
And some Purdue.
But love is an archer with a low I.Q.
A bold, bad bowman, and innocent of pity.
So I'm in love with
New York City.

GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE

GRANDMOTHER'S house? What? Landmark status? What? She's been eating? What? Strangers? She's been eating strangers? Sitting up in bed eating strangers? Hey? Pale, pink strangers? Zut! Lithium? What? They're giving her lithium? Hey? She's a what? Wolf? She's a wolf? Gad! Second opinion? Hey? She's a wolf. Well. Well, then. And Grandfather? What? Living with a stranger? Hey? A pale, pink stranger? Abominable! What's her name? What? What? Belle? Tush. BelleBelleBelleBelleBelle no I don't like it. Well if Grandmother's house has landmark status that means we can't build the brothel, right? Can't build the brothel, right? No brothel, right? Damn and damn and damn.

—Right.

—Well if we can't build the brothel we'd better go out and look for nymphs, right? Do a little nymphing? Get us to the glade?

—Right.

—Or we could steal a kid. A child. A kid. Steal one. Grab it and keep it. Raise it for our very own. Tickle it, light judicious tickling, swab it with rubbing alcohol against the itch, bundle it up and make it warm where previously it had been cold, right? Wham it when it is bad, right? Teach it to be afraid of the dark, the vast, unplumbed dark, the wet, glowing dark . . .

—Right.

—Shoulder the so-called real parents off the stage, those lunks. The former parents, those lunks, standing there uttering dull threats. Get off my case! and the like. Their connubial bliss in tatters, at this juncture. The bonds of gamomania but a spiderwork, at this juncture. Send them notes from time to time, progress reports, little Luke has produced a tooth. Hey? Little Luke showing every sign of that sweetness of soul characteristic of breech presentations. Hey? Hey? Hey? Sing to it and pinch it. "Greensleeves" and "I'm an Old Cowhand." Teach it to figger and bottom-deal, get it a job cleaning telephone booths for the Telephone Company. And in our dotage—

—Our what?

—And in our senescence, it will take us by the hand, take you by your hand and me by my hand, and lead us gently over the hill to the poorhouse. Luke. Our kid.

—There's a naked woman in the next room.

—There's a what?

—Naked woman in the next room. On a couch. Blue velvet couch. Reclining. Flowers in her hair.

—I've seen one. In a magazine.

—Well they're all different, jackass. You can't just say *I've seen one.*

—Well I've got jury duty had an interesting case on Thursday guy'd got his car crushed in an elevator in a parking garage we gave him the Blue Book price, twenty-three hundred and something. Right?

—I mean you can't just say *I've seen one.* That's not enough.

—Well I'm tired, man, tired, I've been tired ever since I heard the truly dreadful news about Grandmother's house, a thing like that brings you down, man, brings you down and makes you tired, know what I mean?

—They're all different. That's what makes them so . . . luminous.

—But she's a stranger.

—But after you sleep with them they're less strange. Get downright familiar, laugh at you and pull your beard.

—I remember.

—Demystify themselves with repeated actions of a repetitive kind.

—Their moves. Their cold moves and their cozy moves.

—Want to go to the flicks, the flicks, the flicks—

—I saw one once, about this guy who jumped from place to place swinging on a vine, and yodelled, yodelled and jumped from place to place swinging on a vine, ran around with an ape a small ape, wore these leather flaps with a knife stuck in the back flap—It was a good flick. I enjoyed it.

—I've seen a bunch. Six or seven thousand.

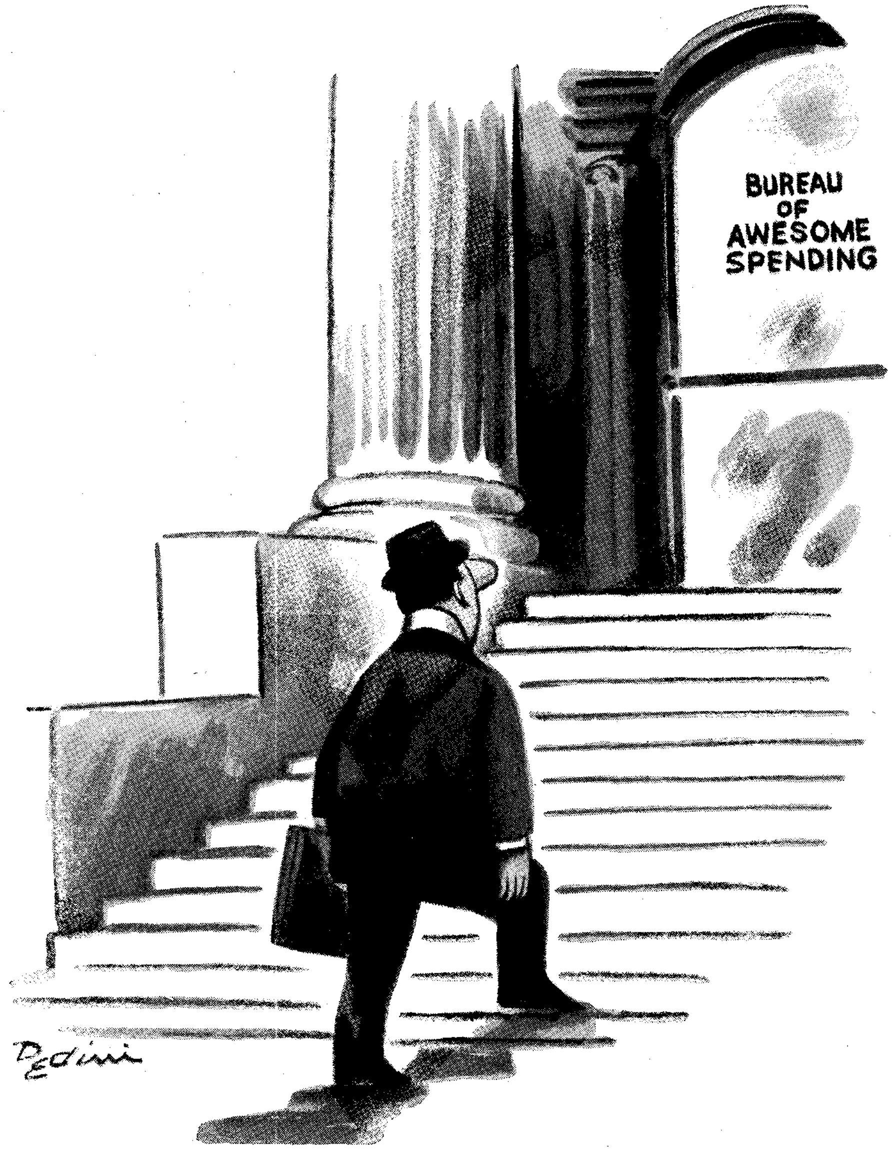
—Of course this is not to say that what has been demystified cannot be *re*mystified.

—How?

—Well you can take them on a trip or something. To a far place. Bergen.

—And then what?

—Seen with tall cool drinks in fetching costumes against the hot white



sands or whatever they are partially remystified.

—No hot white sands in Bergen, man.

—Seen against the deep cool fjords with penguins in their hands they are partially remystified.

—No penguins in Bergen, man.

—Or some kind of new erotic behavior you can start biting them some people like that. People who've never been bitten much.

—How do you know how hard to bite?

—It's a skill.

—It is?

—As a matter of fact I saw another movie, movie about this guy who meets this woman and then they fall in love and then she leaves him and then he meets another woman.

—So what happens?

—He begins living with the second one. She's very nice.

—And then what?

—She leaves him.

—That's all?

—He is seen in a crowded street. Walking away from the camera. The figure becoming smaller and smaller and smaller until it's lost in the crowd. It was a very good movie. I liked it. I liked the one about the guy swinging on the vine a little better, maybe. Well. Want to steal a kid?

—I don't know.

—We could tickle the little sumbitch for a while and then, wham it.

—Feed it brownies and bubble gum.

—Tell it stories and great flaming lies.

—Gypsies steal kids.

—Right.

—Gypsies steal kids every day.

—It's well known.

—Hardly ever prosecuted.

—The wily gypsy. Hard to catch.

—What do they do with the kids I wonder?

—The wily, terrible gypsy. Gone today and gone tomorrow.

—What do they do with the kids I wonder?

—Train them in the gypsy arts. Wine-watering, horse-dyeing, the barbering of dreams.

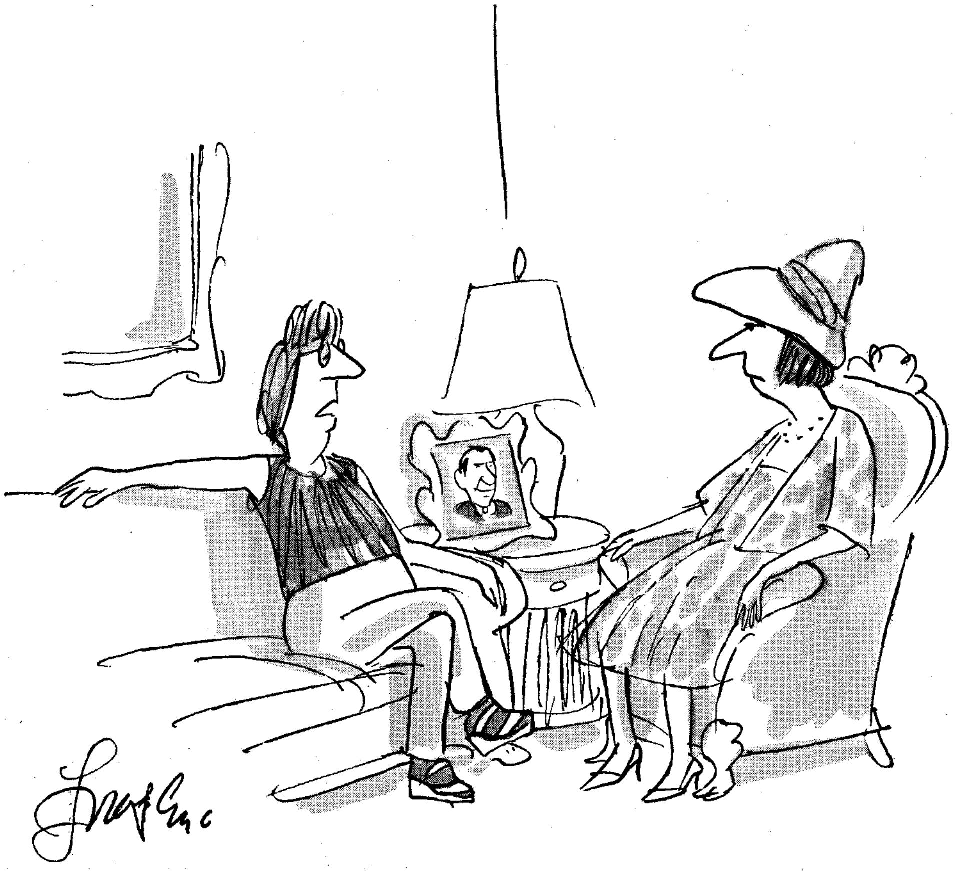
—Gypsy airs scratched into the gypsy firelight.

—Deconstructing dreams like nobody's business. You want to know, go see the gypsy.

—Ever interfere with a gypsy?

—Well not an official gypsy. They only interfere with other gypsies. Now if you're talking about gypsy-*like*—

—Under the caravan. In the rank, sweet grass.



"One night, while watching some purely escapist junk on TV, he escaped."

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—Now if you're talking about a gypsy-*like* individual, wild and free and snarling and biting—

—I meant a real one.

—No.

—I'm sorry.

—But when I saw the great Gaudí church in Barcelona, the great Sagrada Familia, the great ghost of a cathedral or rather great skeleton of a cathedral, then did I realize especially after seeing also the plans and models in the basement for those portions of the great cathedral not yet built and perhaps never to be built, the plans under plastic on the walls of the basement and the models on sawhorses on the floor of the basement, the artisans in smocks still working on the beautifully inked plans and the white plaster models, and the workmen on the extant towers of the Templo Expiatorio de la Sagrada Familia in Barcelona, the workmen on and between the extant towers and walls of the Templo Expiatorio de la Sagrada Familia in Barcelona, the amazingly few workmen still working and still *to be* working for God knows how many decades hence, if the money can be got together, we left our contribution in a plastic box, the amazingly few but truly dedicated workmen still working under the burning inspiration of the sainted Catalan architect Antonio Gaudí, having seen all this I then realized what I had not realized before, what had escaped my notice these many years, that not only is less more but that *more is more too.* I swooned, under the impact of the ethical corollary.

—What is the ethical corollary?

—More.

—When you swooned, did you fall?

—I swooned *upward.* While staring from the ground at the great extant towers of the Sagrada Familia. Reverse vertigo.

—Gaudí however was laboring *in nomine Domini.* I do not see that the ethical corollary as you put it applies, privately.

—Puts an idea under greed.

—My life is a poor one. Relative to—

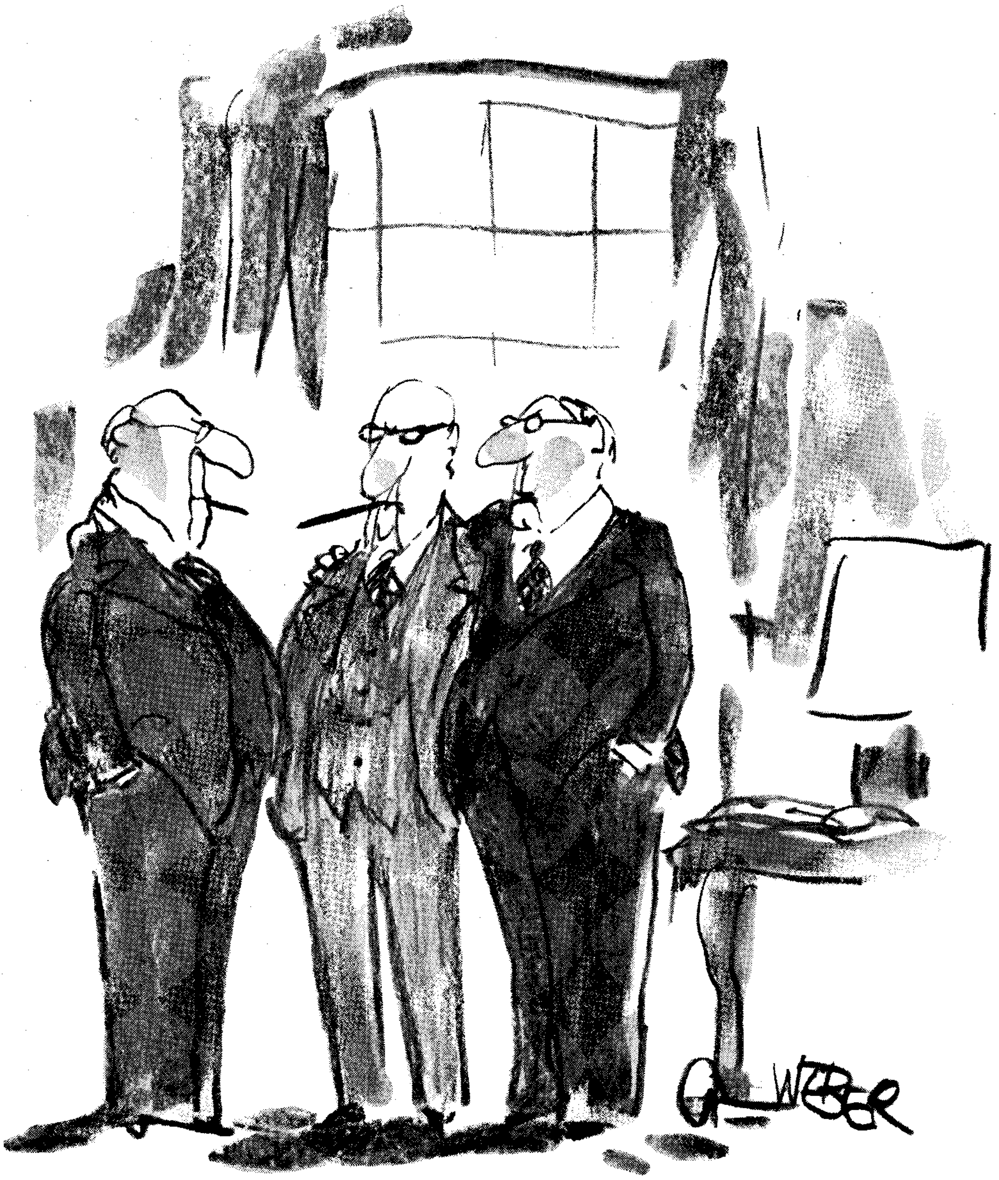
—I know that.

—*Your* life is a poor one. Not bad, but not replete.

—Well I can think can't I? I thought of the brothel, didn't I?

—Poorly that was a very poor idea this one guy thinks of a cathedral and you think of a brothel? Congratulations. You see what I mean?

—I say we steal one, a kid. Find a



"Fred is a saint. Fred, you're a saint."

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good-looking one and steal it, it's not the worst idea I ever heard.

—Not the worst idea.

—And when it grew to the age of sexual availability, we could tell it to wait.

—That's what I told her.

—That's what I told mine too. Told her to wait.

—You told her to wait?

—That's what I told her.

—How did she take it?

—She sat silently listening to me telling her to wait.

—I told mine to wait too.

—How did she react?

—She just sat there.

—You think she's waiting?

—How do I know?

—Some people think sixteen.

—Biologically of course it's a bitch. For them.

—I never understood why things were so . . . out of phase. The biological with the cultural.

—Cultural-psychological.

—Odd to be in that position. Telling someone to wait.

—Has she someone in mind?

—There's this guy he has a Honda.

—You don't let her . . . Those things can be, like *dangerous*, man.

—He gave her a helmet.

—You mean she's running around town on the back of this guy's Honda clutching him tightly around the stomach and her chest rubbing into his back muscles? At fourteen?

—Well what can I do?

—Tell her to wait?

—Well at least it's not a Harley.

—What's his name?

—Juan.

—Oh.

—How 'bout yours?

—Mine's seeing various candidates. Various candidates have presented themselves. The leader of the pack, you might say, is this Claude.

—His name is Claude?

—Well that's not his fault.

—There is one thing, one small point, on which I think we may congratulate ourselves. We gave them plain names.

—Plain, but beautiful.

—What did I see the other day? Jahne. J-a-h-n-e.

—You're kidding.

—Nope. J-a-h-n-e.

—Amazing.

—Yes. So what's with this Claude?

—He's seventeen.

—He's seventeen?

—Yep.

—Little old for fourteen don't you think?

—What can I do?

—Seventeen is a wild age.

—Seventeen is anarchy.

—I was atrocious when I was seventeen. Absolutely atrocious.

—Likewise.

—Drunk driving was the least of it.

—When you think about it now you turn pale.

—And *I* wasn't crazy, some of those guys they were flat crazy.

—I knew a few.

—I mean they thought blood on the saddle was the *plan*, man.

—Don't remind me.

—Talk about behavior.

—Yes.

—Boy this was behavior.

—Yes.

—You can tell them to wait but what do you tell them after you tell them to wait?

—Tell them to keep their ass the hell out of Grandmother's house.

—Not very likely.

—Not very likely.

—Well at least we gave them plain names.

—Plain, but beautiful.

—Steal a kid. Begin all over again.

—Tear it up, tear it up, tear it up.

—Or get us to the glade.

—The heat of the glade.

—The damned nymphs have to be somewhere.

—Beautiful necks for biting.

—Soft anthropological bites.

—Bosomed nymphs, nymphs with a stripe of hair . . .

—Polka nymphs, red-eyed nymphs, drudge nymphs, bombous nymphs . . .

—Nymphs in warmup suits, Mohawks, clown nymphs . . .

—The splendid language of their hair . . .

—DONALD BARTHELME

MARTIN BAYER

BY September, 1916, the hotels on Long Island's eastern extremity were in dire straits. Southampton marked the limit of fashionability, because military camps, whalers, a few remaining Indians, and the thinness of the land projecting unescorted into open ocean kept most people from the one or two resorts near the Amagansett beaches. People had avoided the shore since the sinking of the Lusitania, for it was rumored that the Germans were going to use gas and germ warfare against the Atlantic Coast. Autumn was approaching, and all but the very rich and unemployed were pulled back to Manhattan and Brooklyn as if by electromagnetic force. The sea was cold and bright.

Mr. Bayer had seen a newspaper advertisement describing a hotel as splendid as a palace of Byzantium, overlooking a regal breathtaking prospect of savage sea—with extraordinary conveniences, with a garden close of tall oaks and fireflies—offering ten days' room and board to a family of four at a hundred and fifty dollars. He had forfeited a vacation that summer because business was booming and demanded full attention. It was especially delightful to know that by travelling in the off-season he could bank a hundred and fifty of the three hundred dollars budgeted for a holiday, during a time when he was making so much money anyway. Of course the hotel was a gamble, but one fine morning in Manhattan, when summer's last colors were sharpened by a blast of fall air galloping down the Hudson from Canada, they set out in their automobile for ten days at Amagansett. The air was so clear and enlivening that they wondered why they were headed into the country just as the heat was finally dying.

When Mr. Bayer and Martin had lashed canvas over the suitcases and automotive-repair apparatus, Martin's sixteen-year-old sister, Lydia, got in the front seat with an expression of determination and dread.

"Lydia!" said Mr. Bayer. "Ride in the back with your mother."

"That's right," said Martin, pompously.

"Martin, you shut up. Lydia, in the back."

"No," she said. "I want to ride in the front."

"Lydia, please come in the back," said Mrs. Bayer. "The front is for Daddy and Martin, in case of a puncture."

"No." Every time she said "No," the word got shorter.

"Lydia, Daddy says you'd better get in back or—"

"Shut up, Martin. Lydia, darling, get in back or we don't go to Amagansett."

"I don't *want* to go to Amagansett," she said. "We'll be the only people there. Why can't I ride in the front?"

"Martin rides in the front. He's a boy."

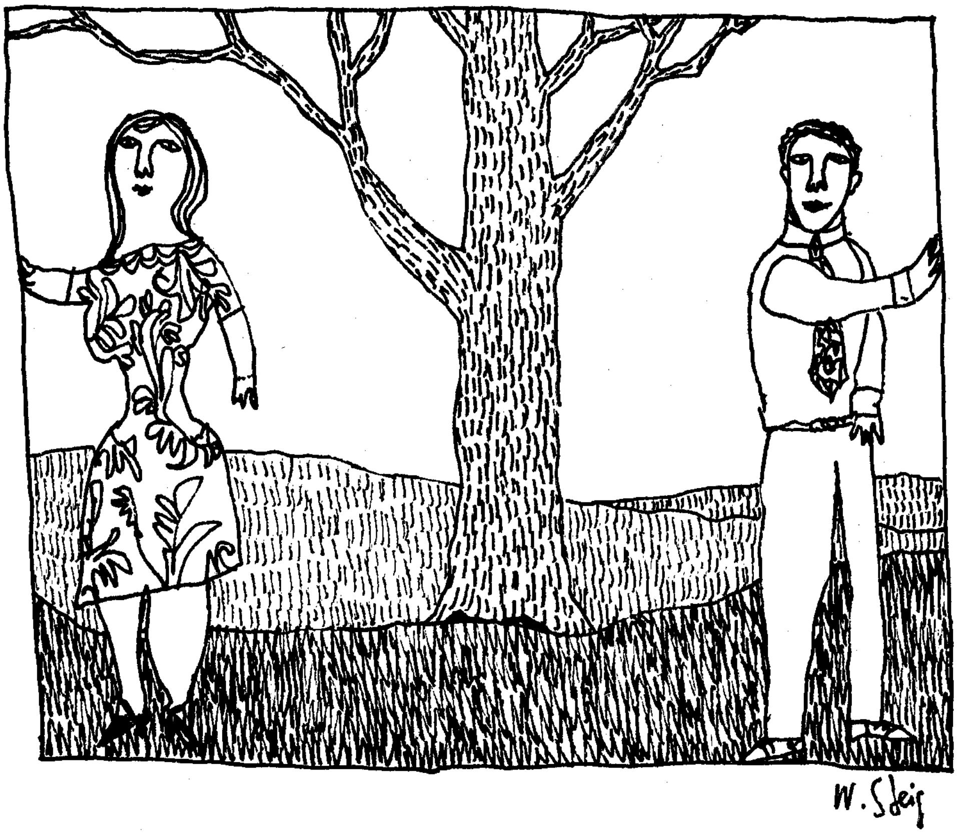
"But he's only ten."

"Ten and three-fifths," said Martin.

"Lydia, Lydia," said Mrs. Bayer. Then she leaned forward and touched her daughter's cheek. Lydia was extremely beautiful, with a warm gentle face. She stood up, got out, slammed the door, got in the back, slammed the door, and stared at the second floor of their house. Her reddened face and neck and incipient tears made her even more beautiful, and her mother embraced her while Martin and Mr. Bayer, nearly chuckling over their victory, climbed in the front and began the driving.

Martin was in charge of the emergency brake, the gasoline gauge, the water temperature, and cleaning the windshield—which he thought was a "winsheel." In a breakdown, he was the warning dummy, rag carrier, and nut handler. Even though Lydia wanted these jobs, she would not have taken them had they been offered. But Martin was extremely proud of the responsibility, just as he was proud to stand with the mannequins in his father's store window, looking grave, as he thought a young mercantile employee should when in public view. But he hated to wash dishes or take out the garbage, and would disappear after dinner as if composed of the rarest gas—better to be beaten up by the Irish ruffians who terrorized the Jews than to take out garbage. This was mainly because the Irish ruffians never did beat up the Jews. Instead, they described it in such convincing detail that the Jews ran home overbrimming with the living English—"He smashed my face, bashed my belly, and splintered my Jew bones"—and the memory of a fight that had really never been.

They drove at 23 m.p.h. down the avenues to the Brooklyn Bridge. Martin glanced in the windows of sepia-colored tenements full of stretching people new to morning. There was still some sense of wilderness left in the city, in the brown and the dust, in the freshness of the earth overturned in excavation, in the farmlike emerald beauty of the Park. Once, his father had awakened him at four in the morning just to walk in the streets. They wound through fresh squares and down empty boulevards into the commercial district, where, at five, the



First Quarrel

markets were feverishly active. Martin was in an airless daze, though on that unusually warm March morning the air was wet and mild. The last drunk was expelled from the most riotous bar with a thunderclap and he wheeled through the doors and hit the sidewalk, rolling about like a ball bearing. Martin thought the ladies of the night were early-rising shopgirls and devoted nurses. Father and son passed countless gleaming fish on ice-covered tables, barrels of herring, vegetables still fresh and spotted with earth from Hudson Valley farms. They went into a workmen's cafe. It was the only time Martin had ever drunk coffee. The proprietor put so much extra milk in it that he had to charge Mr. Bayer another nickel, but Martin didn't know, and, despite his size, tried to blend with the crowd by pretending that he was a grown man.

They drove at 23 m.p.h. because their mechanic had told them that if they didn't the engine would burn out. Martin liked the way the engine sounded, rolling over and around itself like a player piano. The sound of machines was like the rising of the sun on a winter morning, full of promise, relief, and lightheartedness. Martin liked so many things that he could not open his eyes without a pleasant inrush. And he was prone to fits of laughter. Once, they had dressed him up and taken him to a concert hall near the Park. Martin thought it was wonderful—the airy echoing ballroom, a view of dark-green citified trees, a mixture of expensive perfumes, and miles of silver trays with a thousand pounds of what Martin termed "complexly baked sculpture cookies." After eating thirty or forty of these and quenching his thirst with four or five cups of champagne punch, Martin thought the world was a paradise. He took his seat while the musicians tuned their instruments. He was just beginning to fall asleep when an enormous fat woman suddenly appeared from behind a curtain and began to scream and squeak. Her teeth stuck way out of her mouth, and after the especially long and voluminous squeaks, she looked proud and delighted. At first, Martin was dumbfounded. Then he began to giggle, keeping it down until the muscles in his throat and abdomen felt as if they were sweating fire. The pain and tension were such that he started to get serious, when Lydia, afraid of being deathly embarrassed, decided to inflict a minor torture on him to stop the oncoming explosion. This she did by reaching from behind and driving her fingers into his ribs. Overflowing, caught by surprise, and got from behind, Martin shrieked with such force that people all around him jumped in their seats. A storm of laughter then issued from him. Unable to catch his breath, he rolled on the floor in such enviable enjoyment that the rest of the hall found it wonderfully amusing, even when Mr. Bayer swatted him and carried him, still doubled over, out the French doors into the greenery.

THE TRAIN OUT

Fluff from his lap robe hangs in a rift
in the curtains as his eyes ungum.
Nebraska yawns. Mergansers shift
in their mudholes. Morning—aluminum
track sheds begin to flare.

Blood ticks in his temples. Where
did he leave his coat, his keys?
As well in Topeka. Inanities
from a dream of her linger: a china jug,
hot liquor, a room

he cannot place. A tinsel bug
revives against the kindling pane.
Stiff old porters in the corridor
swear to a time when "a train was a train,"
mutter against the diesel's roar.

A green dead dawn . . .
All borders are ends . . .
He conjures a cove; a bed; a song;
rings and a necklace; a barbered lawn.

A catalogue past. Old words, thick as wax.
Exhaust expires in a feint of wind
and the sun glows dull on the tracks.

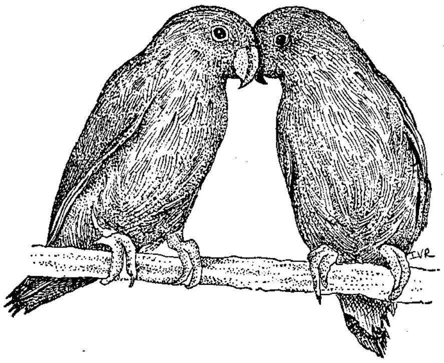
—Sydney Lea

• •

Recognizing her role in the disaster, and that it had cost Martin his allowance and several outings, Lydia took him to the aquarium. Of course he was delighted, but, as they tiptoed through the slimy galleries, he thought she was crazy. "How do you know they're looking at you?" he asked.

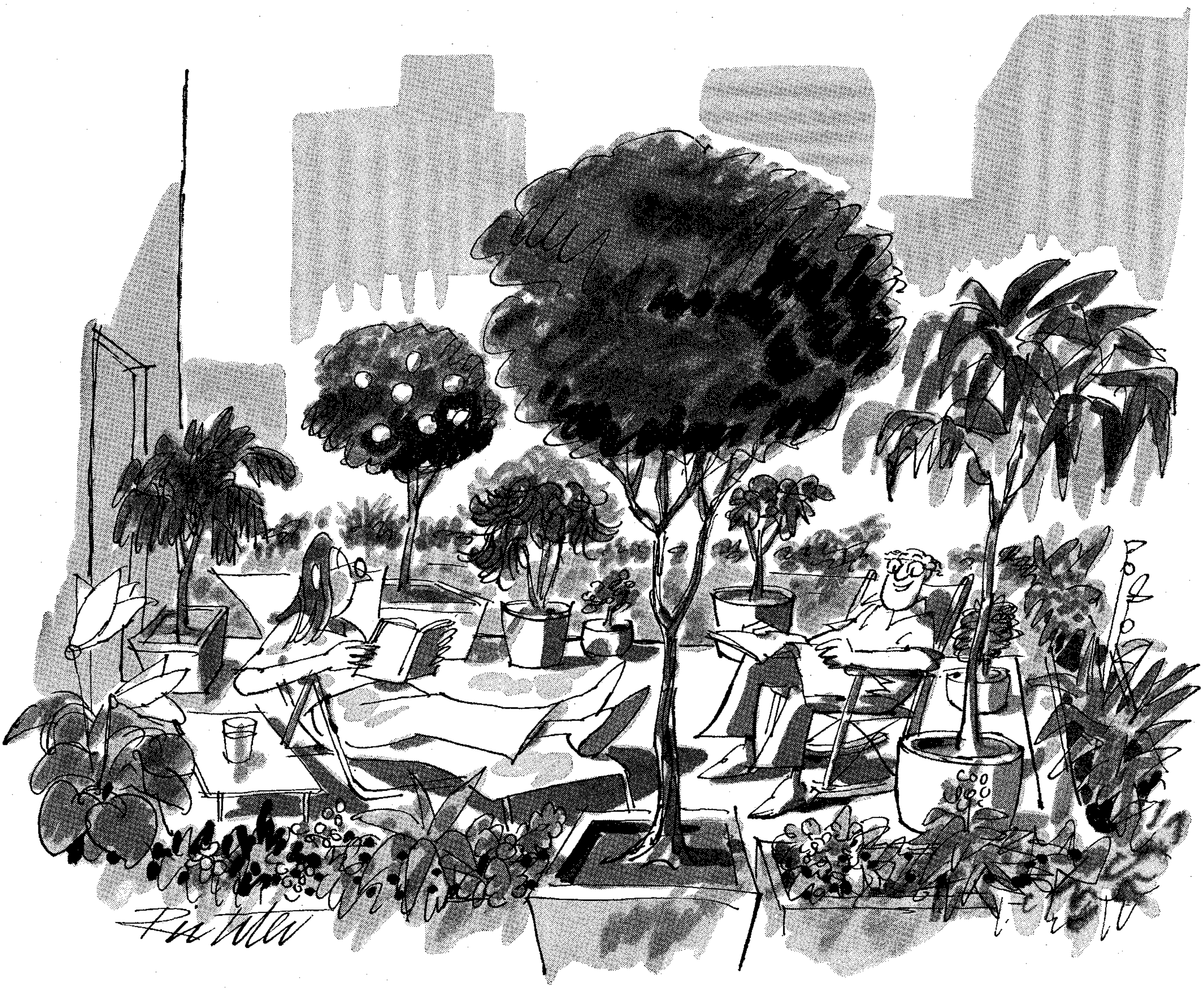
"How do I know *who's* looking?" replied Lydia.

"I don't care if people look at *me*," said Martin, "but you think boys look at you all the time. That's why you walk around like a statue." He imitated her straight oblivious stare, which made her look as if she had a neck injury, and, not understanding her lovely self-consciousness, he was soon lost in consideration of green water, gliding sharks, giant sea turtles jetting along with glinting paddle fins, the humidity on the face of the jewel-like tanks, and the feeling of the water's mass and weight behind the thick glass. He had worn a blue sailor suit, and he had dashed from place to place.



On the Brooklyn side, once the Bayers had viewed Manhattan from the air and seen a landscape of chimneys and brown stone, they passed a faraway group of wan naked swimmers scattered at the foot of piers and embankments (as if they had been thrown there) and soaring from towers and walls into the swirling water. Martin stared at the swimmers with a near-pickled eye. The pleasure was beckoning and indefatigable, but he leaned back to watch the trees passing overhead on a river of blue. He remembered how in winter they went up on Riverside Drive to watch little steam ferries charge across the ice-packed North River, setting out in a puff of white crystal breath, rolling across the opalescent blue water.

THE hotel at Amagansett was a large, airy white frame house standing in the deep green of potato



"Just for today, you call me Oberon and I'll call you Titania. Nobody else has to know."

• •

fields that ran to a bluff overlooking an Arabian stretch of dunes and the blinding sea. Martin and Lydia walked to the water each day to swim and jump down the cool sides of the dunes. The sea was achingly cold, so their parents often ignored the beach in favor of sitting on the porch. In the green and the silence, they seemed to be happy just rocking back and forth in beads of cascading sun, their faces relaxed and content.

For the first time, Martin discovered that he carried a store of strong memories which emerged bright and clear in his eyes and gave him access to a world of random and sudden images as beautiful as the upwelling of music. He was chasing a horse in the pasture behind the hotel. The hotelkeeper, a portly Dane named Friebourg, had told Martin that if he could saddle the colt in the back field he could ride him. "Before you saddle him," the Dane had said with amusement, "you'll have to catch him, and that, little boy, could take a long time. I will sit here and watch, for this will be better than the vaudeville." Martin had not liked the Dane's patronizing attitude, and was determined to catch the colt.

The colt looked at him with the confidence and superiority of a dentist, knowing that after a little bit of fun the creature on tiny legs who had come to capture him would soon be incoherent and exhausted. It was just that way. Martin coaxed him with sweet language, fake smiles, hoarse rhetoric, careful commands, invigorated threats, and pleas for mercy. Nibbling the grass until Martin stealthily approached, breathing hot and heavy, lasso in hand, the colt then flew to another extreme of the field. Martin ran himself silly. Had the colt thrust his neck into the noose, Martin would not have had the strength to hold on, after two hours of the chase. Meanwhile, beyond the clover, the porch had filled with his family and the Friebourgs—the Dane himself, whose laughter could be heard from the pasture; Mrs. Friebourg, a silent hardworking woman; their daughter Christiana, a girl just a year or two older than Lydia; and an ever-present cut-glass gallon pitcher of beer.

In exhaustion and embarrassment Martin discovered that his defeat gave rise to splendid pictures—that the mahogany color of the horse billowed into a world of dark-wood city interiors and the dappled shapes of figures within. An exhalation of breath and a dizzy glance at a lone white cloud, riding far off, locked into a tableau of winter in Manhattan—the breath of horses in snow, dark-blue water off the Battery, a shadow across a cold field in which stood a charcoal-limned tree. These frames appeared and he felt the city behind him in a cloud of heat, as if it were a living body like his own. Even though Mr. Friebourg laughed, Martin continued to chase the horse, comforting himself by enjoying the color in a world he saw rapidly blooming and dying as if it were running the gates of a rigid metal machine, remembering all the while the sadness he felt in the frozen images of a motion picture when it ran improperly and crippled. That night he went to bed early and sore. Mrs. Bayer put may-apple vinegar on his legs for the sunburn, and he fell asleep listening to the breeze in contest with a lissome Norway pine.

The next morning, Martin was outside the hotel at five-thirty, furiously building what he called a "wind indicator," which was a tangle of sticks, flags, strings, and tin cans, designed to sound a different tone for each of the four prime directions of wind. After several hours, it actually worked, though there was no telling what would have happened had the steady south wind changed its course.

Finally, Christiana Friebourg passed by (he had built it mainly for her benefit, imagining that she was watching every step) and asked, "What is that silly thing, Martin? Don't you think you should clean it up before Father gets back from the village?"

Martin was stung nearly to breathlessness, but he managed to reply, "It's a wind indicator, so I can always know which way the wind is blowing, even if I'm inside with my eyes closed."

"What does it matter?"

"It matters," answered Martin, though he did not know why it did. "It matters." Then they both turned at the sound of an automobile coming down the road that led across the potato fields. It was not Mr. Friebourg, for he had gone to town in the wagon.

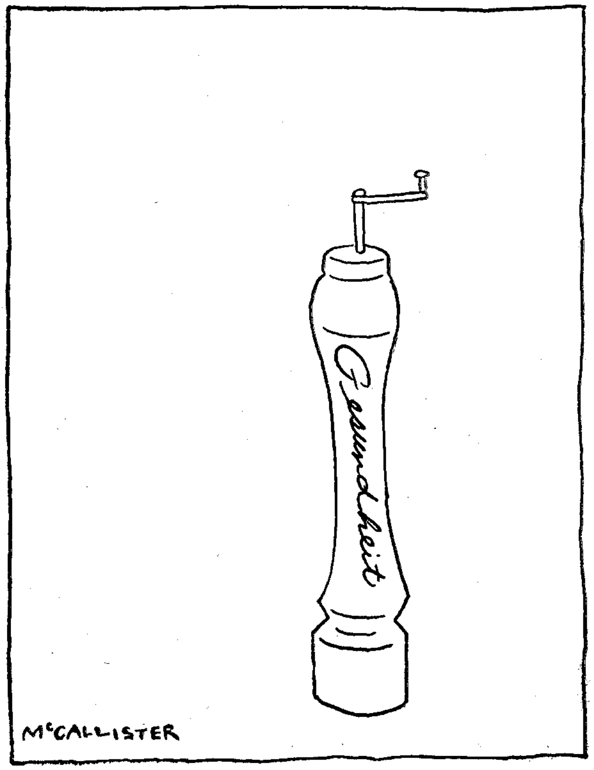
They watched in silence until a drab-colored car with a Marine colonel and his orderly, a lieutenant, pulled up to the hotel. There was an emergency camp at Montauk, across a savage spit of sand and scrub which gave the impression of a fortress and had the air of war, battles, and extremities. Vulnerable on both sides, it was at one point only about five hundred feet wide between the sea and the sound. This was called Napeague Neck. Hundreds of Marines lived on a clifftop above the ocean and practiced gunnery and drills, standing on the sand or knee-deep in low grasses, staring out upon a sea over which they imagined a cold and dark field of battle. When fall closed in, the colonel drove about in his car, looking for families to receive his men for Sunday dinners. It was lonely out there. The approaching autumn was full of fright, as if regenerative nature put to rest were linked to the future of their battalion—which they were sure was destined for France. That morning, it was arranged that the officers would eat at the hotel. The lieutenant evidently knew Christiana, for they spoke by the side of the car as the colonel wrote checks to Friebourg. Martin was awed by the lieutenant's Sam Browne belt and field hat, not to mention the pistol, khaki puttees, lanyard, gold bars, and, most of all, the man's speech. He was from South Carolina. To Martin's delight, he was comfortable and fluent in his dialect. The lieutenant could not open his mouth without conjuring, for Martin, Martin's idea of the South—burned mansions amid coconut palms, at the foot of which speedy alligators with dangling tongues ran as fast as greyhounds in pursuit of bonneted children and screaming slaves.

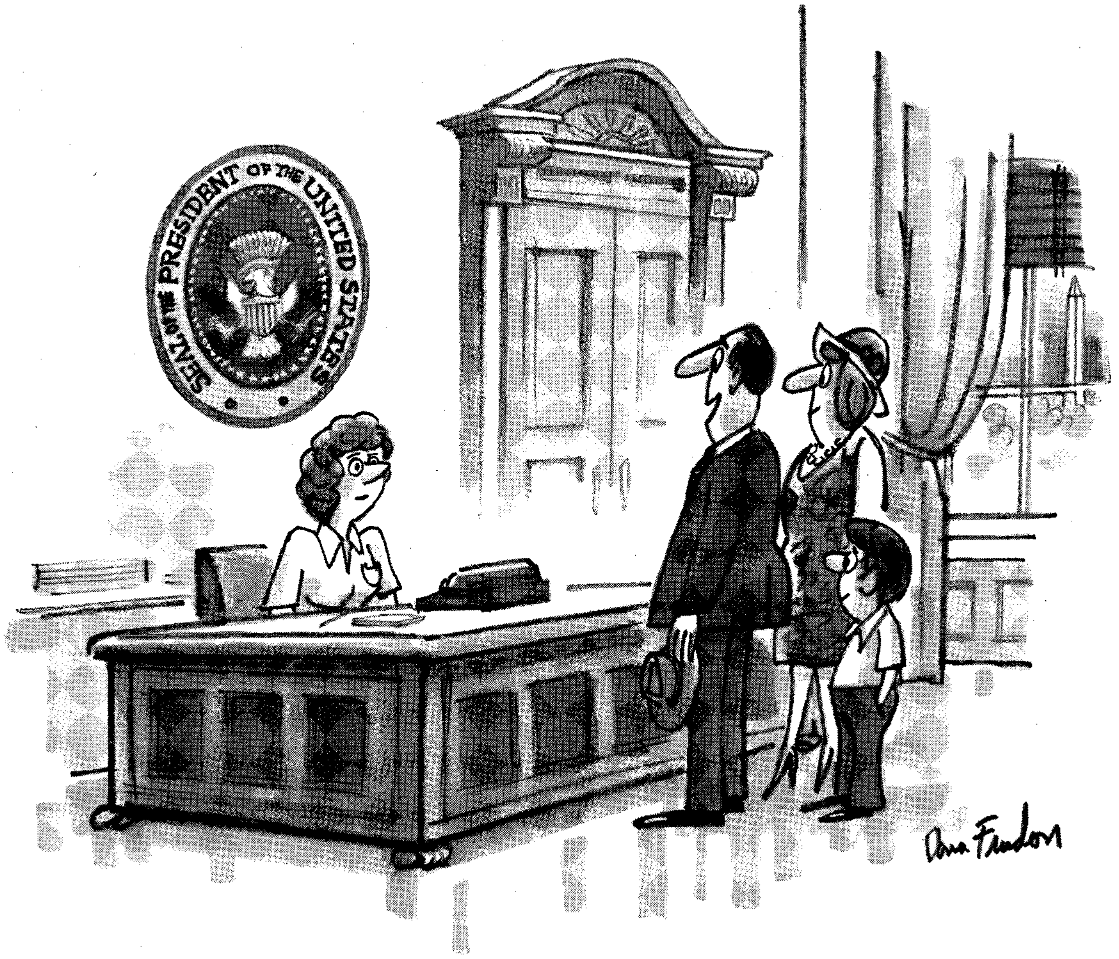
When the two men left in the puffing automobile, Martin felt uncomfortable. He thought they were very high and brave, and he might even have wanted to be like them, but the equilibrium of the place had disappeared. They were attractive precisely because they were subject to the caprice of war. They had about them the uncertainty of a frontier, and were unsettling. He did not want them to come on Sunday, especially since Lydia had been magnetized like a needle on a lodestone, and suddenly looked as if she knew something that no one else knew. For Martin, the Marines were like night and cold.

But that Sunday was like summer, and, in ranging the far stretches of beach in search of landed sharks or the magnificent sight of a Coast Guardsman galloping his mount along the water's edge, Martin forgot about threats from outside. Even looking to the ocean's horizon, he did not sense beyond the rim the haunting battles which, at other times, were felt by all as if they were the approaching storms of the hurricane season. That day was hot and blue, with a magnificent cold wind.

Almost part of the landscape, Martin wandered down the beach. He wanted to go as far east as he could and then turn to make his way home. A breeze came from the sea, tossing spray off the tips of clear waves. Beach and surrounding duneland were abandoned to autumn. Martin crested the top of a high dune and looked over a pine forest and the multiple intrusions of sounds, bays, inlets, and broken spits with the risen water surging through to make pools in the midst of scrub trees. On the partly sand-covered macadam road, he saw the Marine colonel's empty automobile.

They must be swimming, thought Martin, or scouting the coast. Then his heart jumped as he saw two figures disappear beyond a wavelike hill of roseate voluted sand. He ran to join them, breathless and afraid, and, although he did not hesitate long enough to discover why, he felt drawn inevitably into something that he suspected would make him appear foolish. When he came near to where they had been, he stayed low among the sharp grasses. Then he felt as if he had come upon a momentous and terrible truth. The young lieutenant and Christiana Friebourg were swimming together in the sea, having left their clothing on the beach. The air was dry and it snapped at wave crests. The lieutenant and Christiana appeared and disappeared over the plane of white beach as they were lifted entwined and turning in the waves. They kissed, and seemed to dance buoyantly, like swans, in a field of azure. They never wet their hair, and always were grasped together and revolving. Chris-




SEAL OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

"Hi! We're the Clark family, from Paducah, Kentucky, and we thought we'd just drop in and see the President to tell him what we're thinking."

• •

tiana threw back her head. Her body, shining from seawater, was nearly as glossy as the brine.

Not wanting to be seen, Martin crept in prodigious low-coursed leaps to a channel between the hills, and ran toward the hotel convinced that the only way he could save himself from a fate unknown at the hands of the lieutenant was to pretend that he had spent the entire day in the opposite direction. He ran for miles, appearing at the hotel as heated as if he had been firing boilers. For about fifteen minutes Mrs. Bayer had watched him running in from the east. "Where have you been, Martin?"

"I was down there," he said, pointing straight to the west. In a frenzy he went inside and opened a box of stereoscopic views, shuffling them for an hour without memory of a single scene, until Christiana entered casually and went to the kitchen to help her mother. Martin was shaking, sure that she had found him out. How he pitied poor Friebourg and feared for Lydia, since there was no way for him to protect her from the possession which had come over Christiana. When he imagined Lydia naked in the waves, spinning in ecstatic circles with the tall Marine, he blacked out (or perhaps fell asleep) and remembered nothing until the long shadows of Sunday afternoon and a mad rush in the kitchen told him that the Marine was really going to appear, that he would have the daring and contempt to sit at table with the fallen Christiana and her parents. How could anyone be that cruel? And Christiana seemed so happy. Even Martin's sparkling images gave him no comfort. He prayed that dinner would be short, war break out, and the Marines suffer immediate recall. When they were late, he felt moments of relief in imagining that they were already out on the dark hurricane-covered sea, pushing without any lights toward France and oblivion.

THE Marines arrived at early evening—the lieutenant, the colonel, a major, and two other lieutenants. Almost in panic, Martin tried to pull Lydia away from the gathering. He went about, shifty-eyed and breathing hard, attempting to separate her from the Marines. "Lydia! Lydia!" he cried, holding up a dime book. "Read me about Captain Strumpet!" Everyone looked at him in the most peculiar fashion—especially his mother and father, since in normal times Martin would not allow anyone even to touch the Captain Strumpet book.

"Martin," his mother said, "let's not have another Turkish Carpet." No one except the Bayers themselves understood this, and they were glad that it seemed to quiet Martin down. Mrs. Bayer had been referring to Martin's punishment after they had all gone to buy a Turkish carpet at a fancy rug showroom in one of the new skyscrapers. As they entered the elevator, Martin had come face to face with the elevator boy—who was really a midget.

"Fourteen, please," Mr. Bayer said.

Martin took an immediate dislike to this fake boy. He did not approve of the uniform that made the little man look like an organ-grinder's monkey or a jockey in military dress, so he said, "I'll take seven."

"No," said Mr. Bayer. "Don't pay any attention to him." He glowered at Martin, and the elevator boy sneered triumphantly. On the third floor, they stopped to pick up a diva wrapped in tubular white furs.

"Eleven, please," Martin said in falsetto.

The elevator boy tipped his little cakebox hat at the diva, but she said, "Take me to five."

"Nine," said Martin, moving to the back of the car to avoid his father.

"Fourteen," repeated Mr. Bayer.

"Eight!" shouted Martin.

The fake boy was so confused that he had to halt the elevator and ask each person in turn what floor was desired. Later, after they had bought the rug, Martin sweetened his victory by running down fourteen flights of stairs and pushing the elevator call on each floor.

An ochre-colored cloth covered the table, and to the side was a marble-topped cart laden with champagne and bowls of fruit, and shining from the clear electric lights. Christiana stood behind this cart, in a beautiful dress. Her hair was drawn up and this full exposure made her look a bit awkward and sad, but when the lieutenant came in he stared at her gentle imperfect face as if there were nothing finer in the world. He helped her open the champagne, which overflowed onto the marble. They then drank toasts to Britain, France, the Marines, and the U.S. Even Martin had two glasses, but held off at that for fear of another concert-hall disaster. He looked out into the smoky darkness and the rows of trees, thinking of nearby farmyards and their populations of raucous jovial hogs, sarcastic chickens, and bleating lambs. He ate large amounts of black bread and smoked fish.

One of the Marines went out to the automobile and returned with his guitar, on which he played exciting Spanish songs. He had left the door open, and before they knew it a swarm of flashing insects circled the lights. In the middle of September there was always a renaissance of summer insects. They came in waves from the brown grasses and the silent, still forests, their movements urgent and overheated, as if they knew that soon nights as clear as spirit would fell them and they would quickly become only crackling shells among the frail leaves.

It seemed to Martin that the lieutenant paid excessive attention to Christiana. Before dinner they stayed together in a corner, on a velvet divan, talking as if being close and in love were a patent on the world. He pulled out her chair when they sat down. Martin felt less and less apprehensive, for the lieutenant seemed not to be an exploiter or a philanderer but, rather, a good man acting from his heart. This made Martin almost carefree as he began, like the others, to enjoy the lieutenant's and Christiana's mutual infatuation. The young soldier noticed that he was drawing Martin's attention and, almost pained to look away from Christiana, turned to him and asked, "What do you want to be when you grow up?"

Martin reddened and stared at the bronze buttons on which were engraved a globe and an anchor. He had never known how to answer that question. "I want to be a painter," he said.

"And live in a garret!" boomed out Mr. Friebourg.

"He's always silent, but it's never an eloquent silence."

"And live in a *palace*," said Martin, strongly, besieged from all sides. A vision of a life of colors came to him, and he saw himself lying on the smooth lateral white of snowfields, beyond which a blue river cut straight as a rail and steamers were strokes of black, gold, and brown followed by billows of icy mist.

"Mr. Bellows doesn't live in a garret," said Lydia. "If Martin says he wants to be a painter, then he *will* be a painter." Martin nodded his head in approval, of course, and there was silence but for the cicadas outside.

Mrs. Friebourg burst out of the kitchen with a tureen of soup. They drank beer as they pulled apart boiled lobsters and burned their fingers on ears of hot corn. Though the Marines got their own clams and did a lot of surf casting, they seldom had lobster. Perhaps because of the beer and the struggle against the lobsters, talk turned to war. The major had studied closely reports of the fighting, and he opposed the colonel and the lieutenants. "This war," he said, "is by no means like others. Never before have machine guns, aeroplanes, and mines been such a threat to survival in battle. I fear that the casualty rates will eventually make those of the War of the Rebellion seem charitable."

"Nonsense," said the colonel. "What about Gatling guns in the War of the Rebellion and after?"

"Never used in large-scale battles, sir," answered the major.

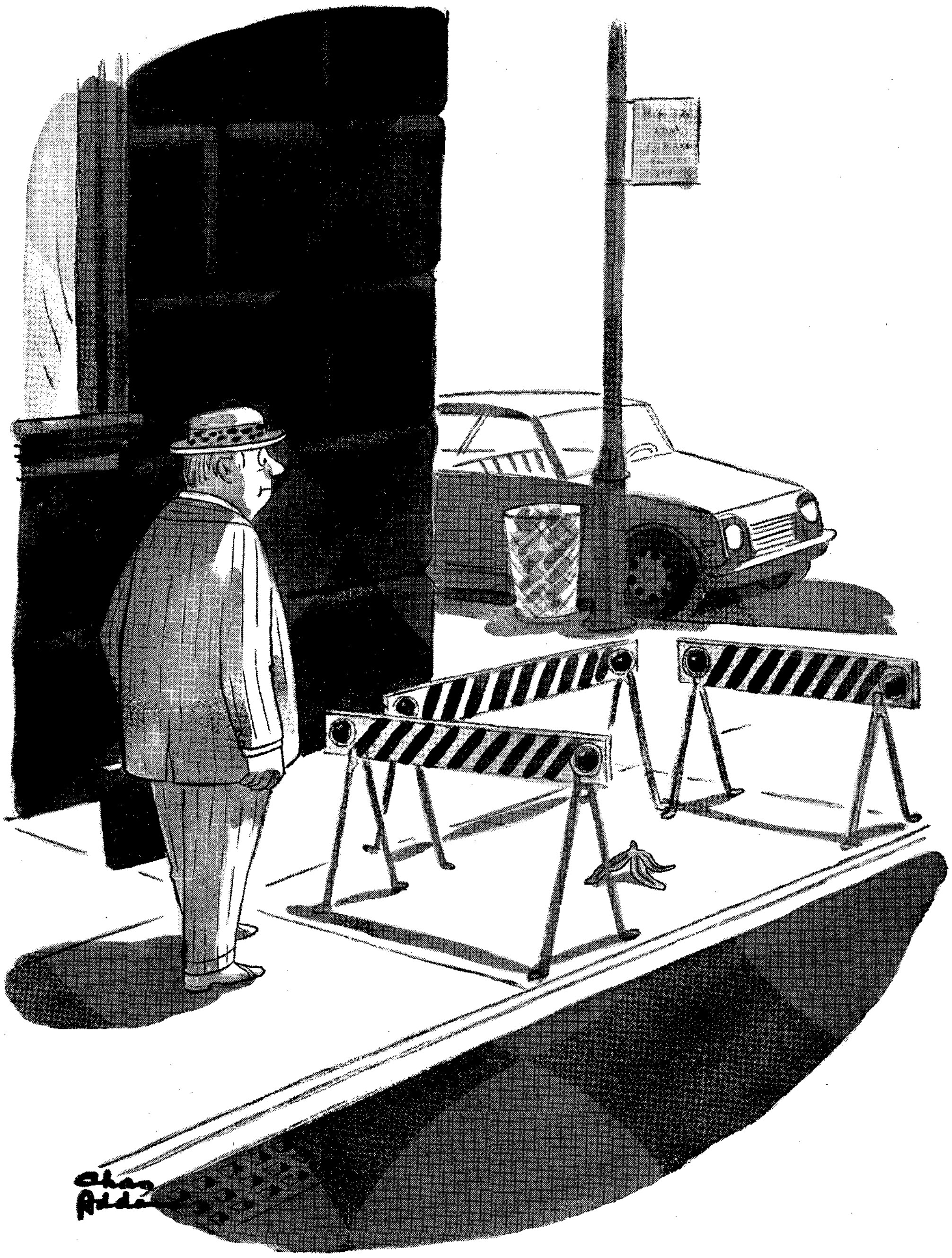
"I think you're exaggerating," said a lieutenant. "For in open country we should be able to outflank the trenches and barbed wire. When the U.S. enters the War, its character will change."

"Indeed," said the major.

Mrs. Bayer interjected. "Do you think we *will* enter the War, Colonel?"

"As certainly as history, Madam. The Germans cannot sink American ships with impunity, and there are political and moral reasons which demand our participation. I believe that with the spring we will declare war, and I hope that this battalion will be among the first to go to France."

Talk of war vanished as



quickly as it had come, when Mrs. Friebourg brought dishes of ice cream garnished with waffle cookies and sprigs of mint. Martin looked at his portion and turned to his father with an air of offended innocence. "Take this leaf out of my ice cream," he commanded.

"Why can't you take it out yourself, Martin?" asked Mr. Bayer.

"I didn't put it there."

"I didn't, either."

"I put the leaf, Martin," said Mrs. Friebourg. "We always had mint with the ice cream in Denmark. Do you know what is Denmark?"

"Of course I do," answered Martin. "I've been there."

"You have?" Mrs. Bayer asked, knowing that Martin had never been out of New York State. "When?"

"Before I was born," Martin said, matter-of-factly. "I remember," he continued, closing his eyes and tilting his face like a medium (he even grasped the table with both hands), "I remember . . . butter . . . lots of butter. And little herring boats in the ocean, turning on the waves. They had beaches there, just like here, but not as big. And there was a circus that I went to; it was very small, they played violins, there was a tiger, the costumes were old-fashioned, and the tent was lit by candles."

Martin opened his eyes. He had made up the butter and the herring boats, but he had really seen the circus. It had come at him from nowhere, and was very real—he had heard the music and seen the tent gaily lit by candles.

"Yes," said Mrs. Friebourg, "I have seen a circus like that," and, for a moment, the room was silent.

Then they got up and had tea, and danced to a player piano and the guitar. The air was cool and beautiful, washed with white, the fields quiet and settled after a summer of growing. The lieutenant danced with Christiana. They were in love. Then, when everyone was red from the dancing and delighted by the near-autumn evening, the lieutenant asked Mr. Friebourg to go out on the porch. Soon Mrs. Friebourg and her daughter followed. The remaining military and the Bayers did not know what to make of it. When the Friebourgs returned, they were beaming. Perhaps it was because the lieutenant was a handsome young man who had gone to university and whose family was known in the South. Perhaps it was because he was wealthy. Perhaps it was because they saw that he and their daughter were genuinely in love. They went to the marble-topped cart and poured champagne. Unable to restrain herself, Mrs. Friebourg said, in her thick Scandinavian accent, "Christiana and Lieutenant Thomson are to be married!" Lydia gasped with pleasure. Everyone smiled, and the Marines made little bows. The prospective bride and bridegroom were young and beautiful.

Martin's painted scenes danced before his eyes. He remembered the gaiety of the azure water and how unknowing he had felt. But then a picture of uniforms appeared (of course, it was easy) and he saw something in the bright colors which was sad. As the adults gathered to congratulate the lieutenant and his bride-to-be, Martin stepped out on the porch where they had watched him, a little boy, foolishly chasing a horse. The picture inside, through the large window, was active and full of life. He saw the lovers on an azure sea, and he saw white foam tossed by dry winds. He saw them perfectly in love, innocent. Christiana was again behind the marble, serving happily. The lieutenant was tall and stood like a prince.

On glowing boards flooded with moonlight he stared at the fields and could hear the sea beyond. It was like an end of summer dream. But despite the iridescence of the moon and the delight of middle September's solid blue fields alive with crickets, Martin saw frightening scenes and sad scenes, of ships fighting darkly across a hurricane-covered sea.

—MARK HELPRIN

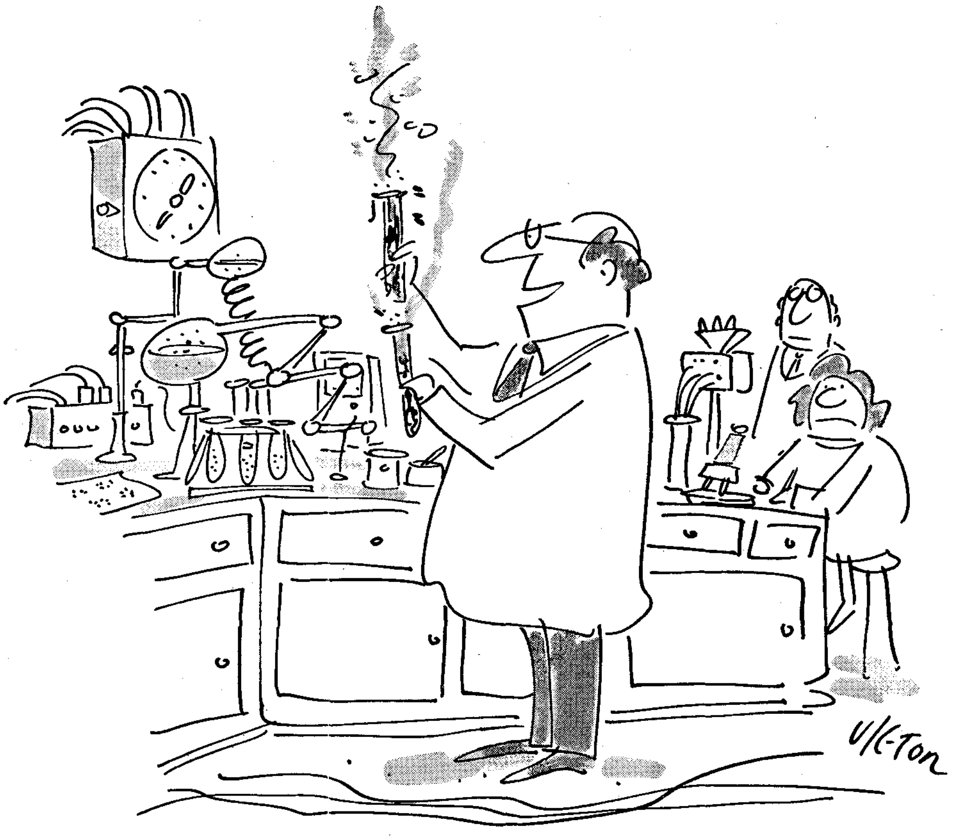
ANNALS OF IMMIGRATION

FORTE E GENTILE

WE would ride up into the low hills west and north of Marlboro, New York, past the vineyards bearing fruit of carmine and deep purple, past apple trees, with their Winesaps and Rome Beauties. There were Hale and Elberta peaches, apricots that were small but very sweet, Seckel pears, and plums. I could see order everywhere: in the planting, in the gray stone walls that separated orchard from pasture and both from the narrow macadam road, and in the weathered houses and outbuildings that were neat even when they were poor. Most of the houses were made of wood, and they always seemed to need paint or reshingling, but a few were of stucco, with faded red tile roofs, and on the mailboxes were the names of those who seemed to have always worked in the hills, even though they had spent an eternity someplace else: Apuzzo, Lazio, D'Angelo, Sisti, Benevento, Bongiovanni, DiStefano, and DiMaria. It was somehow all very familiar and reassuring, and even when my father did not know the people well, or at all, he would know where they came from—the department, the region, the province, the village, and quite possibly even the neighborhood.

It was 1940, and gasoline rationing had not yet begun, and every Sunday, unless the weather was very bad, my mother, my father, my sister, and I climbed into our snappy blue-gray Nash, which had pleated fenders and the gearshift on the steering column, and we headed for those hills. They rose and fell softly, as in Umbria, but when they rolled against the eastern sky, toward the Hudson River, they took on a larger scale that reminded my father of the Abruzzi he had left in 1907, when he was fifteen years old. In those days before the beginning of the Second World War, before so many subdivisions were built, the Hudson Valley was always ordered—even in verdant springs, in the sensuosity of white and pink and yellow blossoms, or in late summer, when the harvests were rich and the orchards were filled with men, women, and children trying to pick the fruit at the right moment.

There was order in our conversations, too. My father worked very hard all week in a restaurant he owned, and I was in school, and so we had very little chance to talk to each other. Sunday was when we took stock of the preceding week. It required very little time. For me, the week was just school, and there was no reason to talk of such oppression for long on a Sunday afternoon. The most important part of our conversation started in the present, and it dealt with where we were and what we saw. These trees needed pruning, there was too much rain or not enough, those blossoms looked especially lovely, perhaps the corn was late, and if a field was lying fallow we would try to recall what had been planted there the year before, or guess what might be planted there next year. I was never content with the present, and the contemplation of the future was boring, since it would always contain the question of what I might do one day, when the interminable drudgery of arithmetic was behind me. And so, with what I thought was great cunning, I would draw my father into talking about the past—of Carunchio, high in the south-central Apennines, where, he told me, there were white figs in July and black figs in September. These were huge figs, he said, bigger than peaches and filled with sweetness, and he could remember good years when the *contadini* of Carunchio picked the black figs as late as November.



"*Eureka! Another sticky, gooey mess!*"

Imagine, figs in November! We had two fig trees in our back yard in Newburgh, and after they yielded what I thought was very fine, sweet fruit we buried the trees, so that they could survive the New York State winter. My maternal grandfather, Joseph Farina, and my maternal great-uncle, Luigi Conti, did this each year. My father, who had a passionate appetite for figs, acted as a kind of public-relations man. Our neighbors thought we were very odd, burying and digging up fig trees all the time, but then they were not *abruzzesi*, or even Italian—not so stubborn and set in their ways, more accepting of the short growing season.

We would give them our figs, because we had more than enough, and sometimes my father would say to them, "Yes, these figs aren't bad, but you have not even seen a fig unless you have been to the old country." And he would pick an imaginary black fig to show how easy it was. In a single, sweeping gesture, he would pop this fig into his mouth, savoring the sweetness, and then bring his right hand under his chin and out in a kind of wave, and he would make a little noise that sounded like "fooosh." It was that easy to eat a black fig in the Abruzzi.

La Croce, the farm my family owned in the Abruzzi, produced ap-

"I'd just like to say—and I think you'll agree with me, Ted—that, let's face it, first and foremost I'm a ballplayer."

• •

ples, too. They were of the type called Casolan, after the town of Casoli, which is northwest of Carunchio but not very far. The *abruzzesi* are proud of their *casolani* and long ago convinced the Romans that if they had not eaten Casolan apples from the Abruzzi they did not know what apples were. There are Romans who will pay extra to get Casolan apples. And there were olives on the farm. My father could not recall his father's ever planting any new olive trees, but there were fifty or sixty of them, and they bore much fruit. The olive was precious: it provided light and heat and sustenance. In the Abruzzi, they say there are olive trees that never die, that were there even before the Romans fought the Samnites and the Etruscans. This may not be true, but some *abruzzesi* believe it, and there are *contadini* who scrape out the centers of ancient olive trees every year and the trees continue to bear fruit.

In the Nash, blessedly without a radio, the legends, the history, the stories of how my family and other families lived in Italy were passed on to me. Of course, it was not the only place I was told these things. But there was something about the hills around Marlboro—the hills that at once made us feel at home and in Italy—that drew from us what we wanted to say and hear about the past. I learned, therefore, that well before and just after the turn of the century, when members of my family and their friends decided to leave the *abruzzesi* Apennines for the New World, they picked three destinations: Newburgh, New York, because there were *paesani* there; Pergamino, Argentina, near Buenos Aires, because there were *paesani* there; and White Cloud, Kansas, because, somehow, there were *paesani* there, too. It is still not clear to me who the first to leave were, or why they went the way they did. Always, I was told, they went because they had a friend—but surely there was somebody at one point who went and who had no friend.

As a child, I was fascinated by the idea of Italy, and I never tired of hearing stories of the Apennines. My father tired of telling them, however, for it was Kansas that he clearly preferred to talk about. If he was one of the *trapiantati*, he had been transplanted twice. The transplant finally took hold in the Hudson Valley, where he lived most of his life, but between 1914 and 1918 he was one of a handful of Italians who lived in northeastern Kansas, most of the time in towns even smaller than the one he had come from. The place he loved most was White Cloud, a community of several hundred people—the very last community Kansas has to offer before Highway 7 meanders northward, following the Missouri River, into Nebraska. My father owned a barbershop in White Cloud and lived in a sturdy frame house three-quarters of a mile north of White Cloud, which calls itself a city but is nevertheless a village. The house stood behind a windmill on a high bluff over the Missouri River. On the hundreds of acres of hills around it—hills not unlike those of Marlboro—there were good beef cattle, hogs, chickens, and just plain, quiet Midwestern forests. In the cleared fields, there was wheat, milo, and corn, and everywhere there were redbirds, snowbirds, wrens, brown thrushes, coyotes, and bald eagles.

In White Cloud itself there were sidewalks made of wood, and every Saturday, before noon, the Indians would come to town from their reservations and sit silently and peacefully on the sidewalks and on the front steps of Kelley's general store, and every once in a while one of them would get up and walk a few steps down Main Street to my father's barbershop for a haircut. The Indians were of the Kickapoo, the Potawatomi, the Ioway, the Sac, and the Fox, and many of them could remember when the land on which White Cloud stood was their land. Like the *carunchiesi*, the Indians had been told by their elders about their legends and their history, and even in their silence they made everyone feel that they knew who they were. Like my father in those days, some of the Indians spoke English with difficulty. But they knew. After all, was not White Cloud itself so named after Ma-Hush-Kah, a chief of the Ioway? It was understandable that the town's founders would want to honor an Indian chief, although not to the point of leaving his name untranslated. Still, if they had been less sensitive, they could have forgotten Ma-Hush-Kah and named the place after Dr. Richard Gatling, the inventor of the Gatling gun, who was one of the early stockholders. Or they could have named it after Lewis or Clark, since their expedition had gone by the site in the early nineteenth century.

Anna Rosa, my father's eldest sister and nearly twenty years his senior, had

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Although it's true
a few screens are torn and various
uninvited types may flutter through,
some of them to bite you,

and true the floors
buckle and sag like a garden plowed
by moles, which makes the shaky chairs
seem shakier, and the bedroom doors

refuse to close
(you'll have three bright bedrooms—and a fine
kitchen, a living room with fireplace,
and bath with shower hose),

there's a good view
of the Pigeon, a river that carries
more than its share of sunny jewelry,
for days here are mostly blue,

and nights so clear
and deep that in a roadside puddle
you can spot the wobbly flashlight flare
of even a minuscule star.

The jolting road,
two muddy ruts, flanks a weedy fan
that slithers against the underside
of a car, then rises unbowed,

but, better still,
go on foot—though this means mosquitoes—
and stop at the overgrown sawmill,
with its fragrant wood-chip pile,

and, stooping, enter
that shack the length of a compact car
where two loggers outbraved the bitter
sting of a Michigan winter.

The room is dim,
spider-strung; you'll sense the whittled lives
they led—how plain, pure, and coldly grim
the long months were to them. . . .

Just a short ways
up the road you'll come to a birch clump
which on all overcast mornings glows
with a cumulus whiteness

and in the brief
light after sunset holds a comely
allusive blush—a mix that's one half
modesty, the other mischief.

While if you hike
to where the road feeds a wider road
you'll spot a mailbox above a choke
of weeds, leaning on its stake;

it looks disowned,
worthless, but will keep your letters dry,
though its broken door trails to the ground
like the tongue of a panting hound.

Venture across
this wider road to reach a pasture,
whose three horses confirm that "the grass
is always greener" applies

to them as well:
offered shoots from your side of the fence,
they will joggle forward to inhale
a verdant airy handful,

and will emit
low shivering snorts of joy, and will—
while you feed them—show no appetite
for the grass growing at their feet.

Now, it may happen
the first nights you'll feel an odd unease,
not lessened by the moths' crazed tapping
at the glass; and later, sleeping

unsteadily,
as bullfrogs hurl harsh gravelly notes
from slingshot throats, you may wonder why
you ever left the city.

Should this occur,
think of the creatures you've not yet glimpsed,
the owl and woodchuck and tense-necked deer
you'll meet if you remain here;

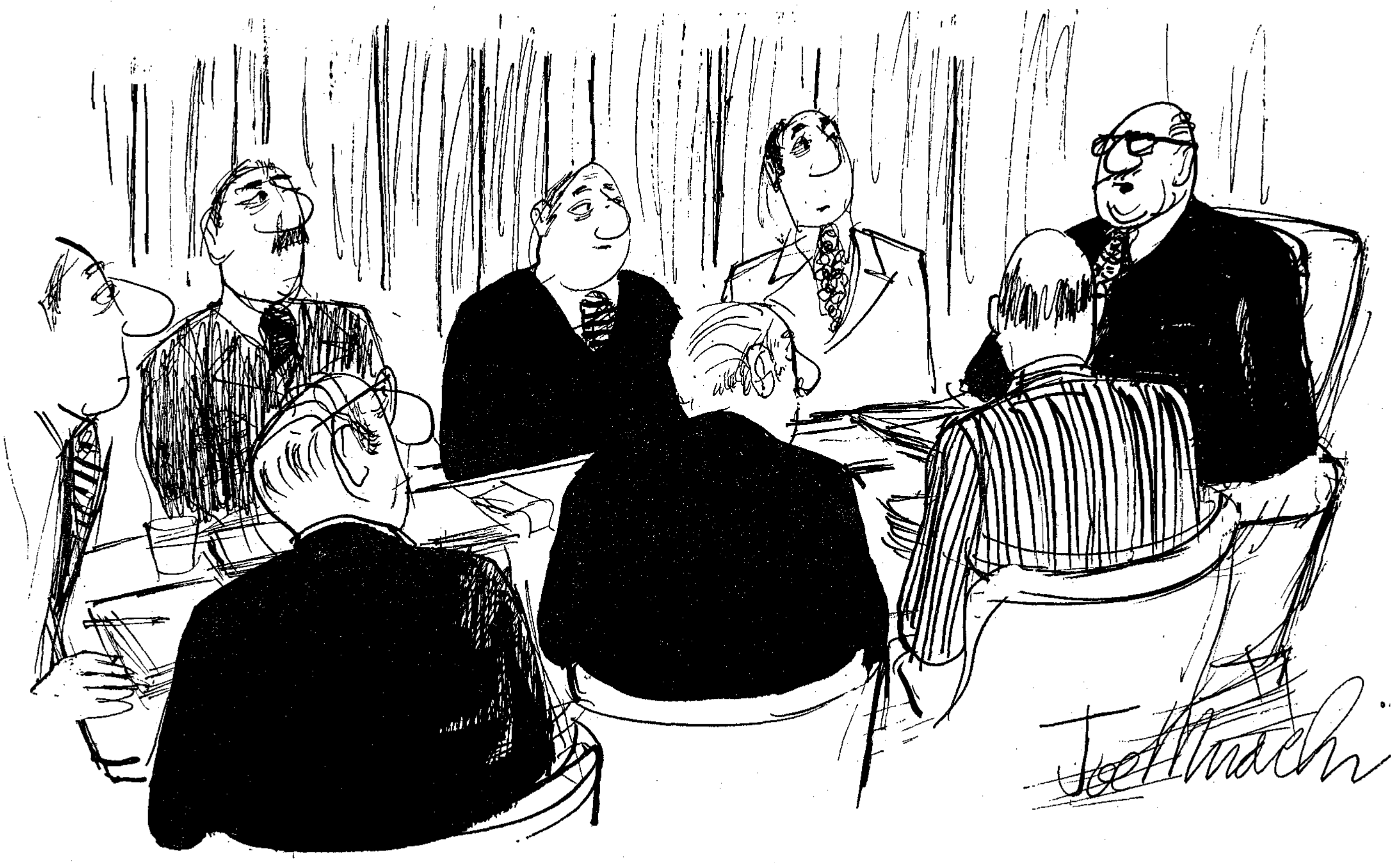
remember, too,
morning's flashy gift—for when day breaks
it mends all wrongs by offering you
drenched fields, nearly drowned in dew.

—Brad Leithauser

• •

left Carunchio long before his birth in 1891. He was the last of twelve children born to Nicola and Maria Antonia San Severo. Anna Rosa came to White Cloud to marry yet another *carunchiese*, Joseph White, who, as Giuseppe Loreto, had left Italy when he was a little boy and Anna Rosa was just a baby. He had never seen her, of course, but he made arrangements to marry her through the Carunchian Arrangement System, which had been handling such matters with great efficiency for two thousand years, give or take a century or two. For at least that long, the people of the Abruzzi have been trying to leave it, and the men have always gone first.

All the steamships crossing the North Atlantic in late February of 1907 were pounded by seas so rough that the conditions to which the passengers were subjected were reported on the front page of the *Times*. Among the passengers arriving on March 2nd, according to the *Times*, were the Countess Marie Grote; Lieutenant Count Ernst August Grote; the Countess de Salignac Fenelon; the Baroness von Kubeck; the Baron and Baroness Osy; Admiral and Mrs. Schroeder; Albert Guggenheim; and



"*All who thought my little joke very funny say 'Aye.'*"

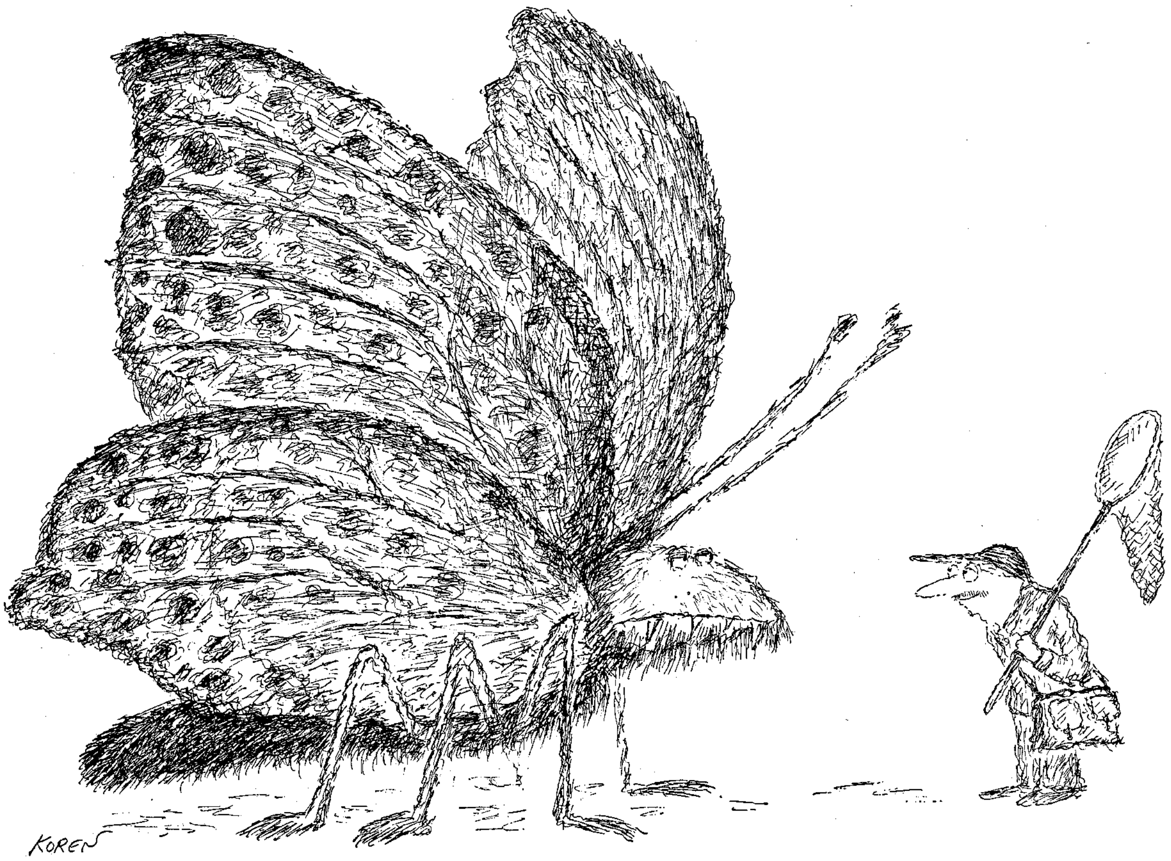
• •

Marie Hall, a violinist who was on her way to Australia. Miss Hall was among the more prominent people aboard the Cunarder Lucania, and Mr. Guggenheim made his voyage on the splendid Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse. The German aristocrats had been on the commodious Prinzessin Irene, which they had boarded in Naples after wintering in the more benign Mediterranean sun. Maria Antonia and Tomaso San Severo, my grandmother and my father, who made the crossing at about the same time, had wintered in the Mediterranean sun, too, and would have been glad to grant interviews to reporters from responsible newspapers interested in their observations on the quality of service maintained during the difficult voyage. Unfortunately, they were not aboard the Prinzessin Irene but, rather, the Italia, a less prepossessing ship, which deposited its passengers at Ellis Island.

In those days, transatlantic passengers tended to be indifferent to the more mundane aspects of American life, but, upon arrival in New York, many of the Europeans in first class probably became engrossed in the trial of Harry K. Thaw, who was accused of murdering Stanford White. It is doubtful that many of them were interested in a front-page story the *Times* ran about a police raid on a poolroom on Broadway between Seventy-fifth and Seventy-sixth Streets, or cared that on March 2nd no fewer than eight trains had been involved in six wrecks of varying seriousness, the nearest at Waterbury, Connecticut, or that apple shippers were complaining of a shortage of railroad cars. The newspapers, showing unusual restraint, did not try to link the complaint to all the wrecks. The Europeans were certainly interested in a prediction by the Panama Canal Company that within eight years it would be able to succeed where the French had failed. And surely many must have been reassured by Nicholas Murray Butler, the president of Columbia University, who told the *Times* that even though he was going to marry Kate La Montagne on March 5th, he planned to lecture during his honeymoon in California. The Edwardian Age was, after all, a heads-up age.

If Maria Antonia and Tomaso had been able to read English, they surely would have found the front page of the *Times* interesting during their first week in America. One story, headlined "BIG FIND IN ROMAN TOMBS," gave a brief account of how workmen who were trying to excavate for a new hospital in Ancona, in the Marches—the region just north of the Abruzzi—uncovered "some beautiful silver vases, a pair of gold earrings set with emeralds, and a gold ring set with a carved stone." As possible descendants of the workers or slaves of those entombed in the third century B.C., they would have been glad to know that "orders have been given that search be made for other antiquities." That same week, Italy, which always seemed more interested in its remote past than in the magnitude of present problems, was reported contemplating the expenditure of a million dollars to dig up the ruins of Herculaneum. Closer to home (the old home), it was reported that a mountain near Potenza, in Basilicata—the region south of the Abruzzi—was in the process of crumbling, causing landslides and burying villages in the Apennines. What the government planned to spend on those ruins went unreported.

When my grandmother and father were finally cleared by the authorities at Ellis Island, they were met by Antonio and Vincenzo, two older sons of Nicola and Maria Antonia who had come to the Hudson Valley several years before. Antonio had become Tony, and somehow Vincenzo had become Jim. They rode northward toward Newburgh on the Erie-Lackawanna Railroad, and during the ride Tony informed Tomaso that he was now Thomas, or, better yet, Tom. More-



over, Tony told Tom that, after consultation with a helpful immigration official and after taking stock of the situation himself, he had shortened the family name, expunging from it the implied goodness of "San."

"Americans love short names," said Tony. "A man can go far in this country if he has a name that these Americans can pronounce. They are nice people, but they sometimes get agitated over long names. Anyhow, we haven't lost anything by removing the 'San.' Nobody in this family has ever been a saint." Maria Antonia said nothing about the change, either during the train ride or after they reached Newburgh. She simply continued to use her name as it always was in the Abruzzi, and never suggested that anyone call her Mary, even though it was a Grand Old Name.

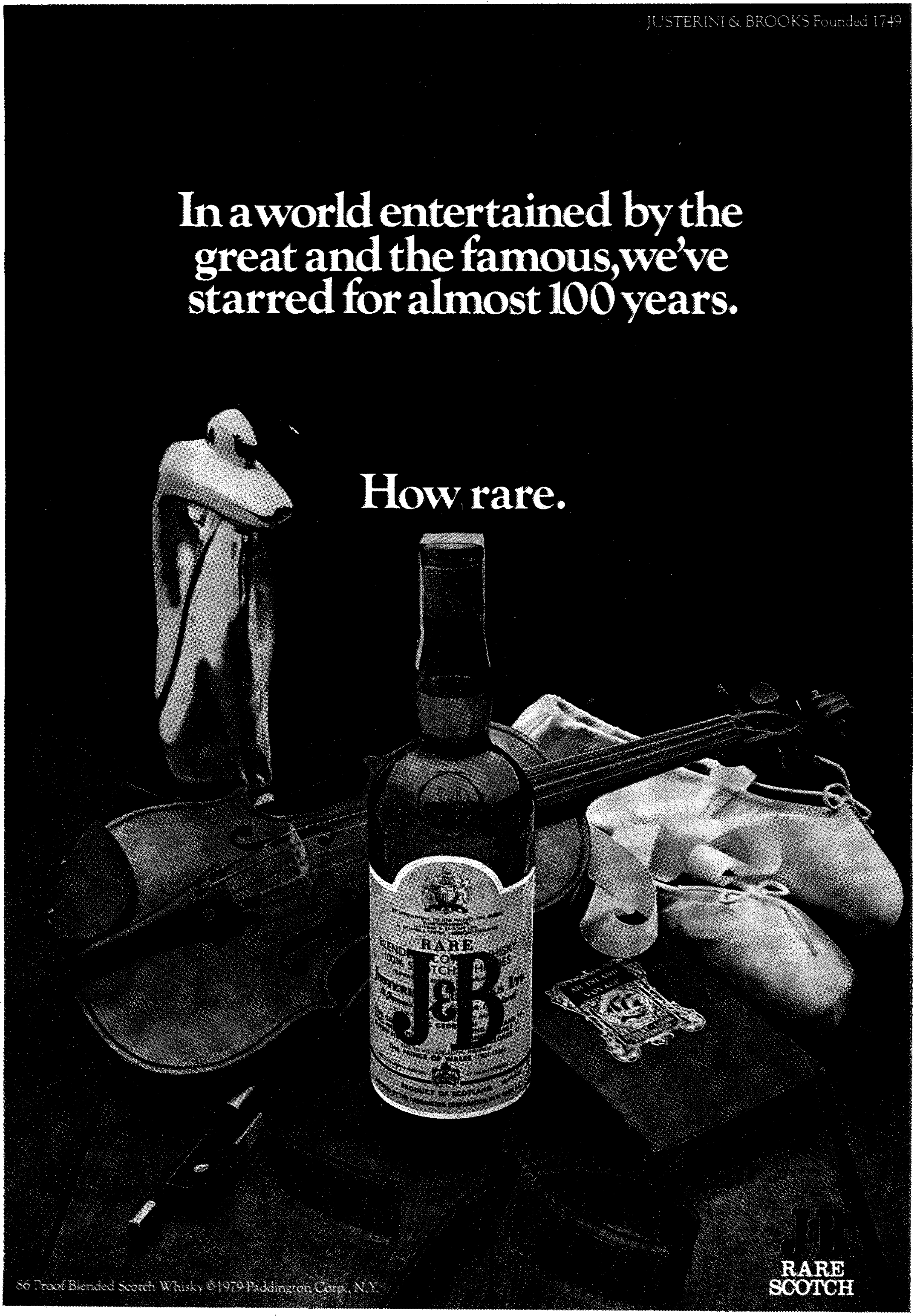
For seven years, the de-sainted family lived in Newburgh, during which time Thomas taught himself to read and write English, and found that his knowledge of written English enabled him to read Italian. He had never been able to do this in Carunchio, where he had had virtually no schooling. In Carunchio, where a few were very rich and many were very poor, the San Severo family was at least comfortably ensconced in poverty, if not in the middle class. They rented a reasonably good house, owned horses, sheep, goats, and pigs and a fruit farm, and had the resources to rent other land, which was precious. Their standing in the community, like everyone else's, was determined by their goods, not by their literacy.

In Newburgh, although his name had been shortened and he could read two languages, the opportunities he had hoped for seemed to be passing Thomas by. His two brothers, on the other hand, were more content with life in the Hudson Valley. Tony had a fruit farm, and although he never earned much money he never seemed to care; he loved the land, and it was enough for him. Jim, trained as a mason and stonecutter in Italy, also found a demand for his skill, although he once complained to my father that he was disappointed that Americans did not esteem master artisans the way the Italians had.

As for Thomas, he had a number of jobs in Newburgh's then thriving textile industry. At Stroock's, for example, he learned to weave blankets for horses and, in a good week, earned as much as sixteen dollars. During harvest time, he was able to augment his income by going into the Marlboro hills and picking whatever needed picking. The Italians were always assured of jobs at harvest time, because they knew well how to pick fruit without bruising it and they worked quickly. My father always liked the orchards, despite the low pay, but he loathed the lint-filled air and clattering machinery in the mills, which offered subsistence wages but nothing for the soul. Other Italians, most of them from the extreme south of Italy, agreed with him. Thousands of them left the Hudson Valley and returned to Italy. It was much the same everywhere else. Between 1900 and 1910, 2,045,877 Italian immigrants came to America, and 1,154,322 returned to Italy. Some of those who were determined to stay attempted to compensate for their factory jobs and long hours as day laborers by learning to play musical instruments and then forming small but formidable concert bands.

In Newburgh, there were no fewer than three *professori* teaching music in the Italian section, and for a time there were Italians who could read *solfeggio* but not English. Professor Capa taught my father the valve trombone and the baritone horn. The baritone required learning both bass and treble clefs, and baritone-horn players were the élitists in Italian concert bands—rather like French-horn players in symphony orchestras. In bands, where legions of trumpeters, cornettists, and clarinettists covet melody, it is noble to stand apart and take the responsibility for the countermelody. Nobility of this sort is most conspicuous in small Italian bands, since Italians believe there should be only a single baritone-horn player. Or, at least, they did seventy years ago, when the bands were quite small—perhaps just thirty or thirty-five pieces. If you are the only person in your section, it is clear that you cannot hide, you cannot take your leads from another musician, you must know how to count.

The Italian bands played what they were able to understand most easily: overtures by Rossini, Bellini, Weber, Donizetti, and Verdi; waltzes and other dances by Johann Strauss and Brahms; even short pieces by Arcangelo Corelli, who would have been aghast to see what happened when his works for strings were transcribed for brasses and woodwinds, and by *Luigi* van Beethoven, who probably would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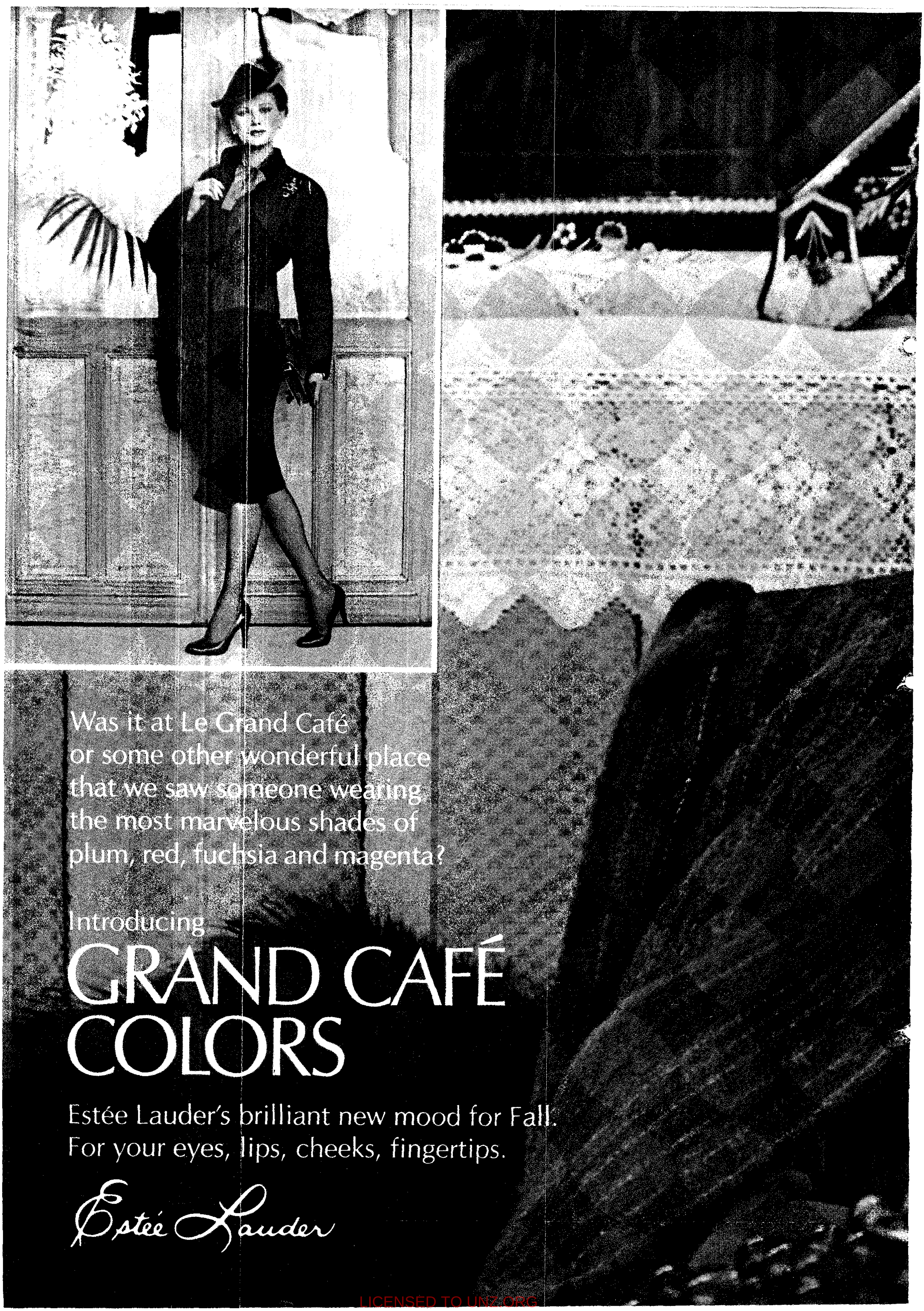

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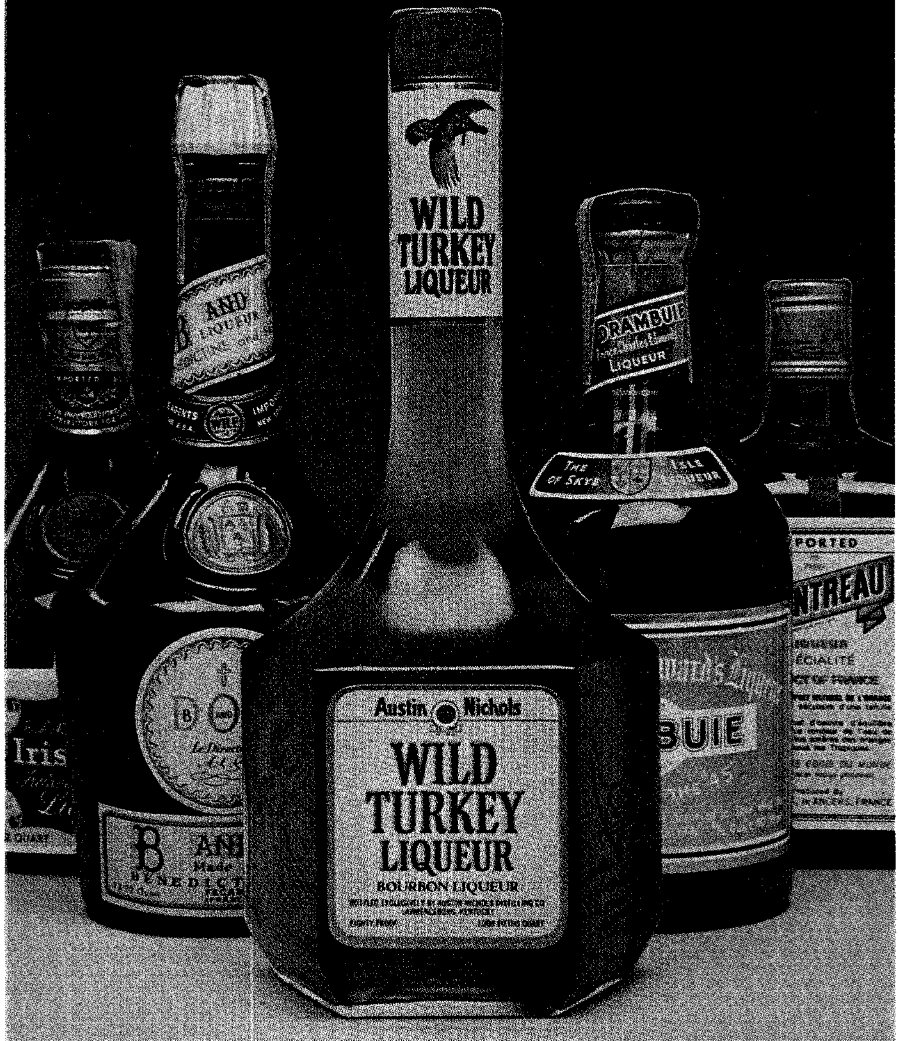

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have been furious and amused at the same time. The *professori* not only taught the musicians but led them in ensemble, for if it was good to be a *professore* it was even better to be a *maestro*. Intense rivalries developed between Italian concert bands in the Hudson Valley, with immigrants accusing each other—usually over glasses of homemade wine in somebody's kitchen—of not really being able to read *solfeggio* and of a lack of virtuosity that caused *dolore all'orecchio*.

Then, one day, Professor Capa announced he was leaving Newburgh. "I must confess that I cannot learn to speak English," he told my father sadly. "I am too old, the language is impossible, and *a Roma si fa da romani*."

My father tried to console him. "Stay here with us and you'll learn the language. Don't worry." But Professor Capa, a fine music teacher, returned to New York City, because, he said, it was the only place in America where he could speak Italian all the time and it really didn't matter.

Maria Antonia and Thomas liked the Hudson Valley well enough, but there were reasons to leave it. Despite all of its haunting familiarity and the presence of so many Italians, there was something wanting in the neighborhoods where the Italians lived. It was almost like not having left Italy at all, and my father, now nearing twenty-two, was upset that the *americano*—the *anglosassone*, who was even more powerful than an Irishman—seemed to be afraid of the Italian and did not want to live near him. There were complaints published in newspapers that it took two or three Italians to do the work of one good white man. Perhaps there were too many Italians together in New York State. Perhaps it was not wise to remain where there were so many just like Maria Antonia and her sons. And there were all those letters they had received, written mostly in English, from Anna Rosa, in White Cloud, persuading them that there was more opportunity in Kansas, that Kansans were, in fact, a people *forte e gentile*, a phrase the *abruzzesi* cherished as their regional motto. So Maria Antonia and Thomas went to Kansas. For my father, there was a logic to it, a just balance he could accept. In Carunchio, in the loneliness of its centuries, there were people who had never even heard of Venice, let alone White Cloud. In White Cloud, there were people who had never heard of Italy, never heard of *La Miseria*—the condition that caused the mountain people to fight the Romans before Christ was born and then caused them to make peace with Kansas two thousand years later.

FRED
ALICE
WEEKEND GUEST

• •

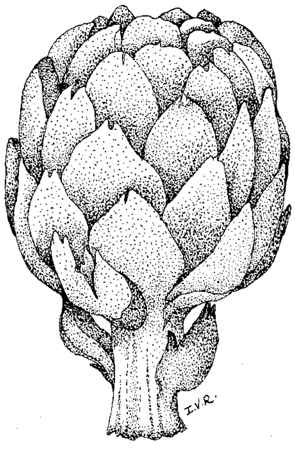
THE letters sent by Anna Rosa had been written not by her but by her husband, Joseph White. Uncle Joe had come to Kansas City, Missouri, two decades or so before the turn of the century, at the behest of his father, Nicola Loreto—a *carunchiese* who had become Nick White. My family's oral history does not tell why Nicola went to Kansas City or whether there were any *paesani* there before him. We think, however, that he may have been the first from our village, and one of the first Italians from any village, to go to northeastern Kansas. Only a few missionary priests and well-educated adventurers managed to make it from Italy to the American frontier before 1880.

When his young, sandy-haired son arrived alone by train in Kansas City, Nick gave him much the same advice Tony and Jim would give my father a quarter of a century later: shorten your name, Americanize your name, and perhaps the Americans will permit you to earn your bread. Nick and Joe White worked hard, and they became favored shoeshine boys in downtown Kansas City. Nick's English always remained far from perfect, but young Joe became fluent quickly, and he augmented his shoeshining income by delivering messages to the inhabitants of Kansas City's bawdy houses from prospective clients who felt that their station in life precluded them from making inquiries in person. Joe brought Nick good luck, and in a few years both were hired by the Burlington Railroad, whose Atchison-Rulo branch went north through the top of Kansas into Nebraska. Nick was a laborer. Joe became an interpreter and translator for the *anglosassoni* who had orders to give to willing workers. Their work train stopped one day at White Cloud to make track repairs, and Nick and his son discovered that there was a tax sale of a run-down house with about twenty acres of land, most of it on a grand bluff overlooking the Missouri River. It was their chance to flee Kansas City, which neither of them liked very much, and move to White Cloud, while continuing to work for the railroad. A couple of other *carunchiesi* employees also moved to White Cloud, but there were never many Italians there. Mostly, there were Indians and people with English and German forebears. In Kansas City, Nick and Joe had heard that there were many Italians to the south, in the coal-mining areas around Pittsburg and Scammon. Better to be where there were not so many; acceptance came easier and faster outside Italian neighborhoods, comfortable though they were.

There was much about White Cloud that would make any *abruzzese* feel at home. It was remote and primitive, and rewarded only those who could fend for themselves, the reward being seemingly limitless isolation. Nick and Joe thrived on the challenge, rebuilt the house, constructed the windmill, which still stands, and planted a vineyard so that they could make their own wine. Kansas was officially "dry" long before Prohibition, but what was sinful to the Americans was food to Nick and Joe.

By the time Uncle Joe was twenty years of age, he was growing weary of translating and quite adept at gambling, the principles of which he had learned as a boy in downtown Kansas City. In those days, the most audacious, accomplished gamblers in the West were in Leadville, Colorado, which was wild even by the standards of other American frontier towns. In 1860, gold had been discovered there, and the prospecting had peaked in two short years. But in 1877, the year after Colorado became a state, carbonates of lead with a high silver content were found, and Leadville quickly grew from a few thousand to over forty thousand. When my Uncle Joe went there, eager to see if he could function in that arena, Leadville contained about three hundred saloons and four large dance halls, and it offered almost daily shootouts in the street.

Uncle Joe's specialty was something called chuck-a-luck. I know little about it except that it was played with three dice and was regarded as a sort of super craps. He was very good at it and regarded himself as an honest gambler. One night, a prospector, eager to put his newly found wealth to good use, walked into the saloon where Uncle Joe was seated, and insisted on having a game with him. Years later, Uncle Joe would tell his children that the prospector was frequently drunk, was, in fact, drunk that night, played badly, and did not lose graciously. But the prospector was a stubborn man, and so they played. Family legend has it that Uncle Joe knew that this man would be trouble, and after winning some money he tried to lose. But the more Uncle Joe tried to lose, the more he won. And the more he won, the angrier the prospector became. "I swear you've been cheating me!" shouted the prospector, and he pulled out a six-shooter and pointed it at Uncle Joe's head. Uncle Joe may have been a gifted gambler, but he did not carry a six-shooter, or even a derringer, and had good fortune not been with him the family legend about Uncle Joe would have ended right then and there. But the bartender, an Irishman with fists like wrecking balls and arms that resembled oversize salamis, marched out from behind the bar, where he had been busy serving the worst whiskey west of Dodge City, and physically intimidated that poor prospector so vigorously that they say you can still hear his roar in Leadville on the spot where the saloon stood. The Irishman saved Uncle Joe's life—perhaps the earliest recorded instance of Irish-Italian coöperation in Colorado. I am not sure that during the same epoch such coöperation would have been forthcoming in New York City.



Enough of Leadville. Uncle Joe returned to Kansas unscathed, and, as if to demonstrate to himself and to his new bride, Anna Rosa, that he could settle down, he became a streetcar conductor in Kansas City. Well, that didn't last very long. A couple of Uncle Joe's friends up in White Cloud were starting a circus and asked if he would like to join them. I suppose there's hardly anybody left now in Kansas, Nebraska, or Iowa who remembers that circus, and even those of us in the family can't remember the name of it. And who can say why Uncle Joe and his friends thought the animals they brought with them would be an attraction in the farm towns they visited, since, as everyone knows, farmers see animals every day. In fact, there are probably farmers in Kansas, Nebraska, and Iowa who would pay good money to spend a day *not* seeing animals.

But out they went, and family legend says that every time they stopped to pitch their tents it would rain, even in places where it hadn't rained for a year. Old Man Confer, a friend of Uncle Joe's and one of the partners, attempted to save the circus by telling people that for a small fee they could look through a window in his stomach and see his innards. Old Man Confer had no such window but, rather, some sort of mirror stuck to him with glue, and so the good people who paid to see his innards saw only themselves, and they didn't think it was funny, and the circus failed. Back came Uncle Joe to White Cloud, chastened but never contrite. He was three hundred dollars in debt—an enormous sum then. One day, while he was wondering how he would ever pay his creditors, along came a friend who owned a thousand sheep near Opal, Wyoming (pop. 500). He offered Uncle Joe a job as a shepherd at thirty-five dollars a month. Uncle Joe spent three years with those sheep, and, just when Anna Rosa was beginning to think she would have been better off coping with *La Miseria* in a country where wives always know where they can find their husbands, Uncle Joe came home with money, horses, and other stock. He paid all his debts and still had money left over. He made it clear that for him the wild days were over. Did he play chuck-a-luck in Wyoming? Nobody knows, but we doubt it.

In 1904, Uncle Joe got a mail route in White Cloud, and although gambling never lost its fascination for him, he spent the rest of his working life as a dependable employee of the United States Post Office, delivering White Cloud's mail by horse and wagon. By 1914, when Maria Antonia showed up with Thomas, Joe White was a pillar of the community, loved and respected by many, including Anna Rosa and their five children.

Maria Antonia was delighted to bear witness to the stability Uncle Joe had created, but after several months of living at the farm she decided to rejoin Tony and Jim in the Hudson Valley. The two older sons had visited Kansas even before Maria Antonia and Thomas came to Ellis Island, but they preferred the East. There was something about rural Kansas that reminded them of the rural Italy they had rejected, and Maria Antonia came to agree with them. She was nearing sixty, and she missed the old neighborhood—a small, homogeneous community, where all her needs could be easily met within a few blocks of home. My father, however, loved the farm and the chores he did for Uncle Joe in order to earn his keep. There was no fruit to pick, except for the clusters of grapes that were pressed into wine, but there were cows to be milked, fences to be mended, pigs to be delivered to buyers with a horse and wagon. They drank lots of wine, and ate spaghetti on Sundays, and my father helped Uncle Joe cure the ham and make the sausages not so differently from the way they had both done it in Carunchio.

Uncle Joe was proud of his English and tried to help my father feel more at home in it, much as my father had tried to do, less successfully, with Professor Capa. Years later, my father would recall that Uncle Joe used such expressions as "My word!" and "Is that a fact!" and "You don't say!" and "Well, now!" The phrase "Well, now!" was not used at the beginning of a sentence in an effort to grope for words in order to formulate a thought. Rather, Uncle Joe tended to say it after respectfully listening to someone say something unusual. To my father's ear, it was suggestive of the refinement that comes with being native-born.

"You speak like an Englishman," he once told Uncle Joe.

"And so should you, because we are here to stay," Uncle Joe said.

Uncle Joe was delighted that Thomas had been able to learn English and gain a working knowledge of the arithmetic needed to survive in a commercial society. But he knew that my father would never have the academic credentials to go to the University of Kansas, at Lawrence—or to the University of Michigan, at Ann Arbor, as his own son, Little Joe, had done—and so he enrolled him in a barber college in Kansas City, because barbering was a trade that was open to Italians. Uncle Joe paid all the expenses, and my father completed the course. The problem then arose as to who his first unfortunate customers would be. An advertisement in the Kansas City *Star* said that the people of Utica, Kansas, about sixty-five miles north of Dodge City, needed a barber, and there my father went.

Utica, with a population of fewer than a hundred, was quite different from White Cloud. Gone entirely were the rolling hills, the bluffs, and the suggestion that somewhere, someplace, there might be a nice mountain to aspire to. The land was flat and filled with wheat farmers—windburned men with sand in their hair and silver dollars in their pockets who didn't care if their barber was a novice as long as he could keep their hair cut short. My father found them to be gentle people, but the sun and the sand had made their beards so tough that he was afraid to shave them, and when he cut their hair the instruments were immediately dulled. Even if a wheat farmer washed his hair just before going to the barber's, the infernal sand would be back in it by the time he reached the shop. My father had a wide selection of strops, and each day, after the haircuts were administered, he would sharpen razors and scissors in preparation for the next day's sandstorm. Perhaps it is just as well that he had to strop his instruments so often, for Utica in those days offered little amusement for an Italian barber who was eligible. He charged twenty-five cents for a haircut, and, for reasons he never understood, the wheat farmers always paid with silver dollars. Indeed, everybody in Utica paid with silver dollars. My father never complained, but he hated them, because they wore out his pockets and tended to compromise his silhouette. He remained in Utica for four months, and he never forgot how happy he was on his last day, dumping all his remaining silver dollars at the bank and receiving in return that wonderful green paper.

Then came a brief period of what might be called big-time barbering. The barbershop was situated in the basement of a hotel at Nineteenth and Main in Kansas City on the Missouri side of the river, and my father was instructed by the proprietor, an American, to "wave the scissors and comb around the customer's head and make him think he's getting one hell of a fancy European haircut, but just take off a little around the ears." The prices were horrendous—three or four times what they had been in Utica—and my father left as quickly as he could.

My family and their *paesani* from Carunchio had a very good feeling about the United States in general and Kansas in particular. I am aware that during the last three decades of the nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth dozens of Italians were injured or killed in mob violence directed against them as a group. I am also aware that Sacco and Vanzetti were executed in 1927, only five years before I was born. But, in the Nash or out of it, my father never referred to these problems—not because they were unimportant but because the Midwest had been so kind to him. Kansans did indeed prove to be a tolerant people, strong and gentle, as Anna Rosa had promised. But for years I suspected that White Cloud, to which he returned to open his own barbershop, must have been dull, and that his memory was deceiving him. On one occasion, I suggested that White Cloud must have been a boring place.

"What do you mean? They had ballroom dancing in the basement of a church. We had waltzes, we had the foxtrot, and we had a lot of fun."

In those days, he and his friends danced with Ruby Hall, a local Indian girl, with one of the Kelley girls, and with the daughter of Maxwell the pastrymaker, among others, and they listened to my father play American folk songs on his harmonica.

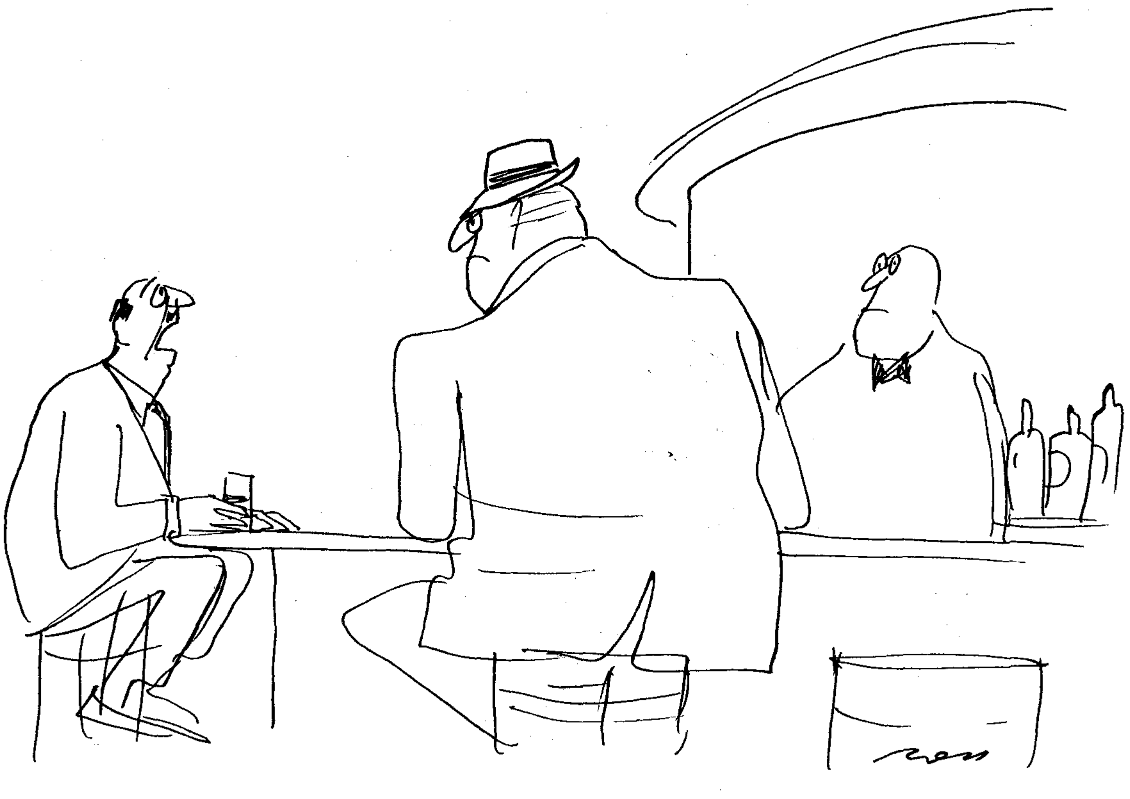
There weren't enough Italians to form a concert band, but there were enough Italians with attractive daughters to make life enjoyable even without a band. For example, there was Rosa, the daughter of a pharmacist in St. Joseph, Missouri. Uncle Joe, utilizing the Carunchian Arrangement System, which threatened to work anywhere, spoke to Rosa's father, and preliminary arrangements were made for her to marry my father. But Rosa didn't like the waltz or the foxtrot—or any dance at all—and was not interested in the harmonica, the baritone horn, the valve trombone, the Hudson Valley, or the figs of September. Uncle Joe was upset; he thought it was time that Thomas settle down.

But my father wasn't ready. St. Joseph wasn't far away, and there were attractions there that he enjoyed with Little Joe, who had become his closest friend, and with Earl Graves, a competing barber in White Cloud. Mr. Graves was a light-skinned black man who passed for white, through no fault of his. On one occasion, Mr. Graves took my father and Little Joe to a night club in St. Joseph that was "for colored people only." In those days, all three of them might have qualified for non-white status, but when they got to the night club, which Mr. Graves said offered a new kind of music called jazz, the bouncer inspected them through the peephole and refused to let them in.

"Hey, wait a minute, I *am* colored," said Earl Graves indignantly. "And, what's more, my friends are Italian."

"This place is for colored only," said the voice on the other side of the door, and the peephole closed forever.

There was no peephole, however, at any of the little shacks that were just across the Missouri River from the foot of Main Street in White Cloud. Kansas was dry, Missouri was not, and on Saturday nights Pete Lear, who owned a hotel in White Cloud, one of the Confer boys, Little Joe, Earl Graves, and my father would take the ferry—a large rowboat—to what grown men in Kansas regarded as the promised land. There were thirty shacks set up to dispense whiskey and cigarettes. Nobody among my fa-



"I cannot emphasize too strongly that it is my very, very humble opinion."

ther's friends drank hard liquor, but they found it absorbing to watch others do so. Years later, even after he had owned a restaurant, my father would tell me he had never seen people consume more whiskey in a few short hours than did the men of Kansas who came across the Missouri River on a Saturday night.

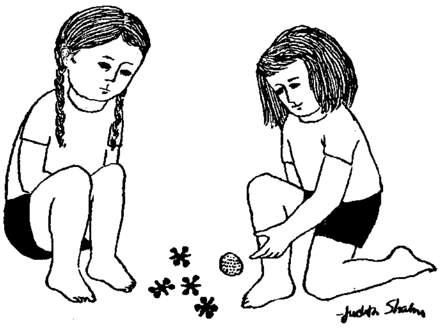
THERE are veterans of military service who never talk about it, because they wish to forget the regimentation and the violence. There are veterans of military service who talk about it incessantly, because regimentation gave their lives structure and violence an outlet for energy not expended during regimentation. And then there are people like my father, who saw no violence, who was apparently oblivious of regimentation, and who tended to view his Army service as the mechanism that obtained for him not only his American citizenship but trips to Nice and Monte Carlo as well. Like many other Kansans, he served in the 88th Division, 351st Regiment, Headquarters Company. His lieutenant was an affable young man from Louisville, Kentucky, named Bergman, who was determined that even though the company might one day be wiped out by German artillery he would continue to look neat and trim. He was very particular about the way his hair was cut, and since my father had made all his mistakes on the forgiving wheat farmers of western Kansas, the Lieutenant was pleased that his own sense of good grooming would not be assaulted by war.

In June of 1918, the outfit was sent overseas with virtually no training, although Lieutenant Bergman, a good officer, was thoroughly familiar with "Infantry Drill Regulations of the United States Army for 1911 with Text Corrections to February 4, 1916"—especially the chapter on leadership. Paragraph 364, on page 93, said, "The best results are obtained when leaders know the capacity and traits of those whom they command. . . ." My father was given a pivotal spot in a three-man unit that was supposed to shoot a Stokes gun—a popular muzzle-loading mortar, which had been invented in Britain by Sir Wilfrid Scott Stokes in 1915. My father carried the barrel, and his two colleagues were responsible for the shells and the stand. The unit was never far from the Lieutenant.

They landed in the South of France, and they marched northeast in the general direction of Verdun. They saw no Germans. They heard no artillery. Bergman was promoted to captain. His haircuts were now even more important, and there was ample time to administer them, because the Stokes mortar remained silent. On November 10, 1918, the regiment was placed on alert. On the morning of November 11th, Captain Bergman, looking every inch the leader that he was, led his company to the front, only to discover that it was a front without a fray, because the Germans had surrendered. My father won no medals for conspicuous valor, saw no action, witnessed no devastation, never rose above private first class, learned French faster than anybody else in the company, and years later still found it difficult to believe that there had ever been a war.

For him, the Great War was an enormous Boy Scout hike, and it was preserved for me in sepia. There is my father in the photography salon of Blanpieds, in Nice, sitting ramrod straight, his arms folded across his chest, his tunic freshly pressed, exuding the quiet strength that can come only from a combatant who has not seen combat. Against a fine stone wall topped by a wrought-iron fence somewhere in France stand six soldiers from Headquarters Company, their leggings muddy, their campaign hats at rakish angles, looking grim—not because they had been locked in mortal combat but because they had been living on hardtack for two weeks and they felt that the French were overcharging them for wine and cognac. The eye follows the campaign hats along the top of the wall until the middle of the photograph, when the tall, rangy Kansans and Oklahomans stop and there is a little man from the Apennines, only five feet four inches tall, looking not unlike Hopalong Cassidy—and then the Midwesterners return at great altitude.

A year after he left it, my father returned to Kansas, planning to remain there, and met Little Joe, whose college training had won him a commission but not an overseas assignment. Little Joe was restless; he had decided that he did not want to be a lawyer and did not wish to continue at the University of Michigan, and he suggested that they go to New York for a rest, to see relatives, and perhaps even to see New York City itself. It was supposed to be a short trip before they returned to Kansas to settle down, but neither would ever return.



In the Hudson Valley, they both met the women they wanted to marry, and they planned a double wedding for October 12, 1923—my father's thirty-second birthday. But on September 11th Little Joe died of what was diagnosed as strep throat. He was the first member of our family ever to have gone to college, and he was proof to the family that the great flight from the mountains had been worth it. Joe White came to Newburgh to claim his son's body. My father had a car, and, in an effort to distract him from the preparations, took him for a ride along the Hudson Valley from the Marlboro hills to a spot south of Storm King Mountain overlooking West Point.

"My word," said Joe White. "I believe this is the most beautiful place I've ever seen."

"But in Kansas the people are nicer," my father replied.

In the years after Little Joe's death, the family grew silent within itself. The letters grew less frequent between Kansas and New York, and nonexistent between the United States and Pergamino, Argentina. The family had in common only its past, which is not the stuff of which correspondence is made.

IN 1959, I had saved some money, and I convinced my father that he should take his first vacation ever and return to the mountains of the Abruzzi that he had left a half century before. We decided to spend six weeks in Italy, and went first to Milan, where we feasted on *capretto*, the baby goat that would have been an unseemly luxury in Carunchio. We also bought tickets to La Scala and went to Bergamo, where we ate mountain strawberries. They were sweeter than anything I had ever tasted in the United States, but my father remembered having strawberries like them as a boy. The world of the *Rinascimento* which we saw in Verona, Venice, Padua, Florence, and Siena had little to do with his Italy—an Italy that few outsiders have seen and fewer understand. Far more than Sicily, Calabria, the Campania around Naples, or any other Mediterranean area I can think of, the Abruzzi resists comprehension. The *abruzzesi* aren't just poor, they are desperately poor; yet they seem to revel in their inaccessibility. They are taciturn, yet

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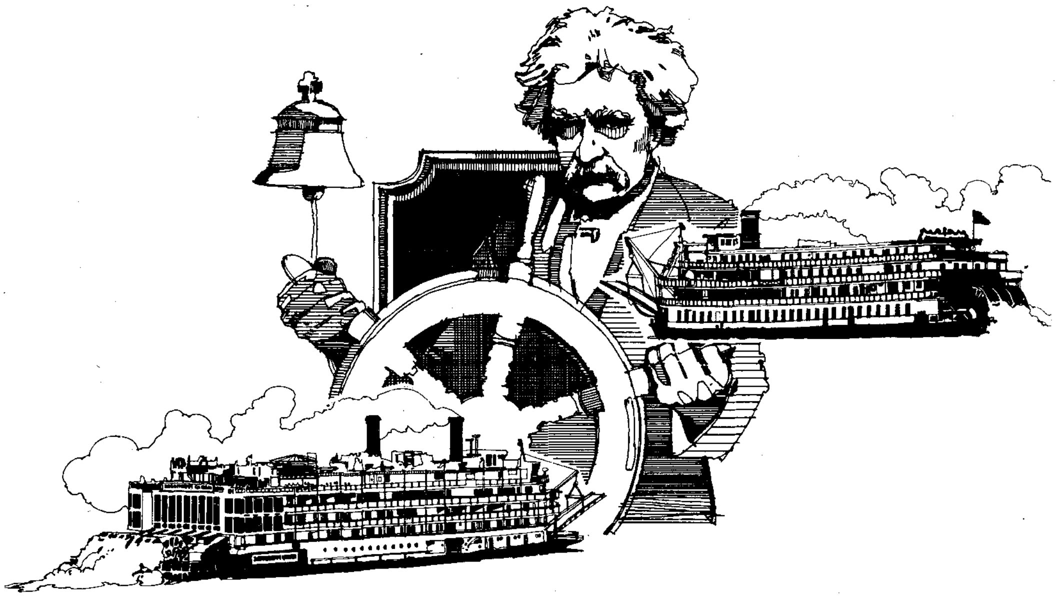

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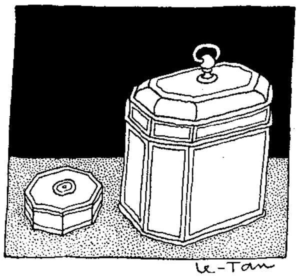
they produced Ovid and D'Annunzio. They are probably the most stubborn of all Italians, scoffed at for the grinding, single-minded practicality that has been essential for their very survival. Yet they sent Croce down to Naples to write about things nobody needs for survival in the mountains. The *abruzzesi* will convince you that they are singularly without guile, yet they sent to Rome a so-so historian named Sallust, who became a great conniver, even by the generous standards of Caesar's court. A hundred and sixty-five kilometres to the west of Carunchio there are magnificent buildings spanning several architectural epochs; the seat of a religion that claims six hundred million adherents; fountains; political intrigue; umbrella pines; grand opera; and an estimable concentration of gloriously overcivilized people. But the *abruzzese* smiles and says only that he is *forte e gentile.*



In Rome one day, after finding the Etruscan Museum closed when it should have been open, my father and I sat in the Villa Borghese and planned our trip to Carunchio. As we had come down the peninsula by train, I had wondered if my father really wanted to go back. He did not seem as ready to talk about it as he had been in the hills near Marlboro. I could not understand how he could be so close and not want to return. I did not understand that it was not the proposed automobile trip but the voyage in the time machine which most troubled him.

"Are you really sure you want to go up there?" he asked me. "Are you sure you want to see it?"

"Of course I'm sure. We have talked about it for years. I thought it was the reason you decided to take this trip. Why should you ask a question like that?"

"You don't understand," he said. "We are mountaineers. It's going to be very tough up there. I know you well. I want to be sure you can take it. If we go, we'll have to stay for a while."

I told him that, to judge from everything we had seen thus far in Italy—and that included Naples and Salerno—I had to conclude that the primitive region where he was born was probably no longer primitive. "The Abruzzi isn't based on anything we have seen," he said, giving me a chance to back out before it was too late.

But there was no backing out. I rented a Fiat that had an engine displacement of only six hundred cubic centimetres, and he looked at it and said, "You are going to the Abruzzi in *this?*"

"No," I said. "*We* are going to the Abruzzi in this."

We got a road map at an Esso station. The map divided the country into *Italia Settentrionale* and *Italia Meridionale.* The map made no mention of *Italia Centrale.* Perhaps most of Carunchio's problems were expressed by the map, which placed it on the fold. It was literally impossible to trace a road from Rome to Carunchio by using *Italia Settentrionale,* which is where Esso decided Rome was. All roads led to Rome; no roads led to Carunchio. I had always told myself and my friends that we were Central Italians. It took the people at Esso to shake me with the truth that there is no Central Italy. Central Italy is a fiction. There is the north of Italy and there is the south of Italy, and the Mason-Dixon line, it would seem, runs through a little place in the Abruzzi called Civitella del Tronto. To the north of it were the old Papal States. To the south had been the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, which was created in the eleventh century as a result of the Norman conquest, and which later became the Kingdom of Naples.

The Norman conquest? The *abruzzesi* near the Maiella will tell you that no *normanni* ever conquered them—*normanni,* whose troubadours graced the Sicilian court with songs in Provençal. Nor did the *abruzzesi* see the *saraceni,* who came before the Normans and probably gave Italy the artichoke; or the *visigoti* and all the other Germanic tribes, who, Tacitus tells us, had "fierce blue eyes and reddish hair; great bodies, especially powerful for attack . . . by climate and soil they have been inured to cold and hunger." It certainly sounds as if he were talking about us, and if we never saw the northern barbarians, then where do we get our fierce blue eyes from? And couldn't it be argued that the reason they never conquered us is that we were too poor? No self-respecting imperialist would climb the Maiella for Casolan apples or the black figs of September, although the crazy Romans do.

The Fiat was fun to drive—especially downhill. We made the mistake of taking the Via Tiburtina out of Rome. The people who made the Esso map colored the route red, and, besides, we had taken it before, to Tivoli and the Villa d'Este, and, as almost everyone knows, that is a very nice ride. But as soon as we left Tivoli the road, also known as Route 5, began to writhe in pain as it contemplated the Simbruini Mountains, which only anticipate the mountains that are to come. I was constantly downshifting, but to turn back was unthinkable. Surely Roman bureaucrats had taken the Via Tiburtina two thousand years ago in a largely unsuccessful effort to exact taxes from my ancestors, and if they could make it I could make it. Every once in a while, the road would straighten out for a few kilometres, and we could see what we were getting into: the northern approach to the Maiella, more than nine thousand feet above the sea—the place where Italy is at its wildest. By the time we got to Sulmona, Ovid's birthplace, the Fiat was sputtering, and the May sun was retreating toward the Simbruini. Back in Rome, which I was beginning to miss, it would have been an opportune time to have a little *caffè nero* on the Via Veneto and contemplate the evening meal.

"There is nothing wrong with your car," said an attendant at a gasoline station in Sulmona. "It was only a loose sparkplug."

"How long do you think it will take us to go from here to Carunchio?" I asked him.

"*Dove?*"

"*Andiamo a Carunchio.*"

But he had never heard of Carunchio, even though we were just to the west of *La Maiella* and Carunchio was just east of it. The Esso map indicated that there was a road over Maiella's bottom which went through Campo di Giove and connected with another road that went to Casoli. There seemed to be other little roads that went through Atessa and Casalanguida, and then we would be practically in Carunchio. But he did not know about these roads. I showed him the map and the roads, and I told him I wanted a shortcut—*interrompere bruscamente.*

"*Troncare?* Where are you from?"

"We are from New York."

"*Madonna mia.* I am from here and I would not take so small a road over the Maiella," he said.

He was a very competent mechanic, and he would not charge us for tightening the plug, and we probably should have spent the night in Sulmona. But Ovid never gave me any reason for wanting to spend a night there. As far as I know, all he ever said about it was "*Sulmo mihi patria est.*" That's hardly enough to generate enthusiasm for the

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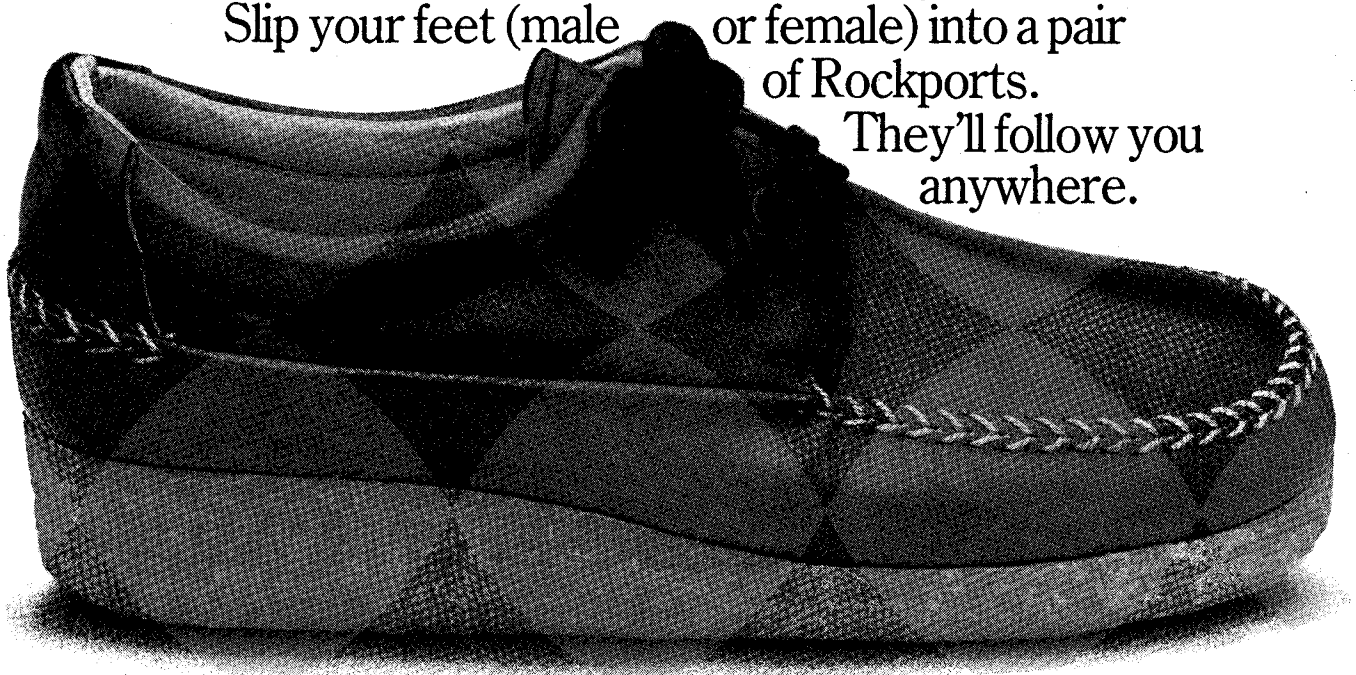

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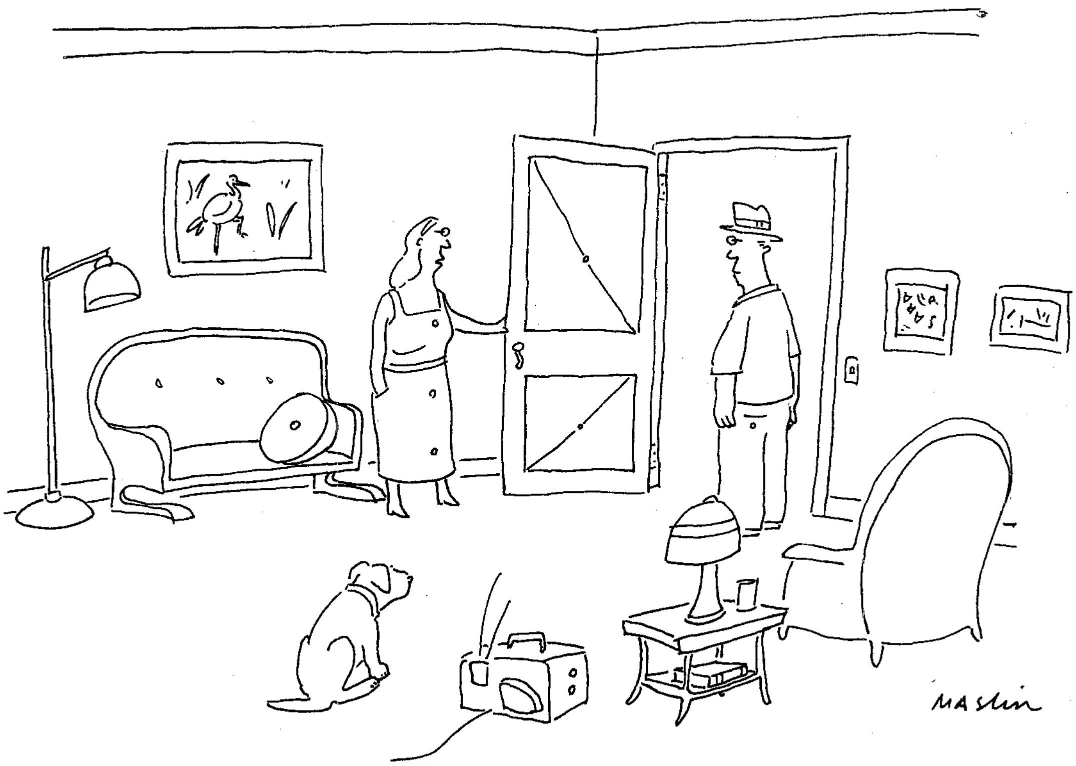

"Bring unto us dessert with topping."

place. I was aware, in Sulmona, that although there were lots of Fiats around, and people to fix them, and radios, and flush toilets, and machinery, I had already left a part of the present behind me. In Rome, you stand in the present and look at the past, but in the Abruzzi you are really in the past. Your frame of reference must become that of another century. If you live on the western slope of a mountain, there is no reason to know what there may be on the eastern slope. You may assume that there is an east slope, but not much more.

We pushed on. I was resolved to make Carunchio by dark, and the Abruzzi I saw in the late-afternoon sun made the endless gear shifting unimportant: great, yawning valleys, greening and empty and awesome. No, there was nothing of Umbria here, and I would never feel the same again about the Marlboro hills. We climbed and descended through the rocks, and I began to wonder at my father, sitting next to me, who had actually got out of these mountains a long time before without my help. I began to try to picture what Carunchio would be like. The name has always sounded funny to me; that is, it is fun to say. It may not sound as funny as Poggibonsi (which is not in the Abruzzi but in Tuscany, on the road between Siena and Florence), but "Carunchio," when said properly, sounds like a small Fiat starting up on a cold morning with a half choke. "Carunchio" surely lacks the Gothic command of "Montefalcone," just to the southeast of it; nor is it as expressive of the Abruzzi as "Pietrabbondante." Whatever else the Abruzzi is, it is *pietrabbondante*. As far as I can tell, "Carunchio" as a word has no meaning. And so the place cannot implicitly have the drama of "Passo di Diavolo" or "Castel di Sangro," and by no means does it have the avenging imperiousness of "L'Aquila." I am not sure about the origin of the word "Abruzzi," either. The Romans designated an area of Italy as Bruttium, but that was Calabria, not us. They called the *abruzzesi* Prætuttii when the high mountains contained nothing more than democratic peasant tribes: the Vestini, the Marsi, the Pæligni, the Marrucini, and the Frentani. "Prætuttii" is a tantalizing word, seemingly half Latin and half Italian. Do I translate it "before everyone"?

Around 1000 B.C., the Picenes lived between Ancona and the mouth of the Sangro, and south of the Sangro were the Samnites. They quarrelled with the Etruscans to the west but were allied with them, too, and at one point formed a confederacy with the Marsi called "Italia" and made its capital Corfinium, in the low Apennines east of Rome. They all fought the Romans, and, eventually, they all lost. Sulla had six thousand prisoners massacred on one occasion, but suggested it was nothing to get excited about, "because they were mostly Samnites." By 90 B.C., Rome had technically vanquished the rebellious mountain people, and she issued a Lex Julia, which granted citizenship to all Latin and Italic peoples remaining loyal to her. Rome was tired of fighting those stubborn people to the east.

All this doesn't explain why the Abruzzi is so called, and I suppose I should point out that it isn't even called that anymore; the name has in recent years been singularized to "Abruzzo." The first written reference to it that I can find came in 600 A.D., when St. Gregory wrote a letter to Oportunus, the Bishop of Aprutio. The Latin "p" and "t" become "b" and "z" in Italian. It is possible that "Abruzzi" is linked somehow to the Italian verb *abbuzzire*, which means "to turn cloudy." And if we remove the preposition we find that "bruzzo" is suspiciously close to *bruzzaglia*, which means "rabble," and *bruzzico*, which means "dawn." It would have been convenient for the Romans to look eastward, think of dawn and rabble at the same time, then concoct a basic word to cover the rabble who lived in the dawn.

Not far from Carunchio, when it was already quite dark and the little car was swallowed by the night, I stopped the engine and got out. The fragrance of the cool May night was overwhelming. If you stop in the Marlboro hills, you see the lights of the towns along the Hudson, and so it really never gets totally dark. But on the east side of the Maiella the night is as dark as it can be in Europe. There were no lights save from the stars. These were stars I had always known, but never like this—so close that you could pick them as easily as you could a black fig in September. *Fooosh.*

Driving on, I thought about the night of another May, fifty-nine years before, when Nicola, my father's father, had died, precipitating the circumstances that would send Maria Antonia and her youngest son to America seven years later. My father had told me about that night. It was a Saturday, and every Saturday night Nicola would take his son Quirino into a *caffè* in Carunchio to meet his friends and sip a *liquore fino*—something to wash away the week. He came home at a proper hour, as always, but in the dark-

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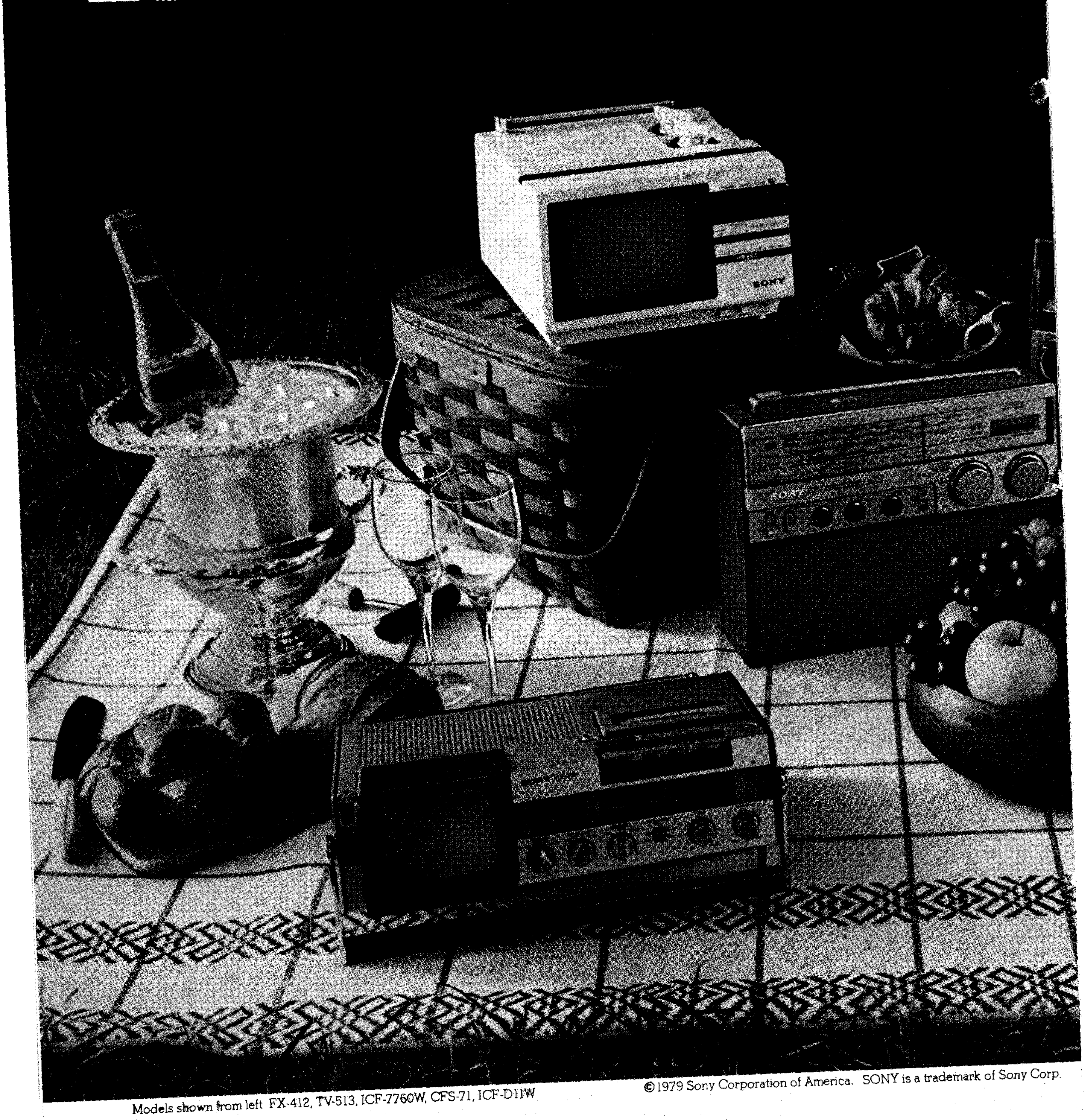

Models shown from left FX-412, TV-513, ICF-7760W, CFS-71, ICF-D11W

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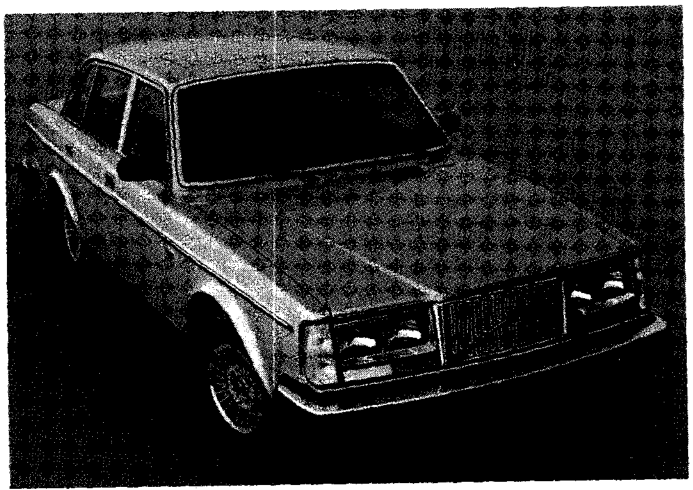

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ness of the bedroom he shared with Maria Antonia he cried out in pain and lapsed into unconsciousness.

The lamps were lit. The family was in an uproar. Almost nobody ever got sick, and surely one would not become ill from drinking a little cordial. My father was in his room, wide-eyed. He watched them from the shadows as they fretted in the yellow light.

"*La fattura*," someone said. "He must have had an enemy who gave him *la fattura* in his drink."

Quirino ran out into the night to summon the *mago*—the only man who could deal with *la fattura*, if that is what it was. And, in case it was another kind of illness, they sent someone to fetch the town *dottore*, Francese—though in Carunchio the doctor was called *maestro* most of the time. Francese was an immense, rotund man who could never move as quickly as he was expected to in emergencies. By the time Francese showed up, the sleep jiggled out of his eyes by the horseback ride from Carunchio, the elfin *mago* was already mumbling something that nobody could understand, in an effort to drive the poison out of Nicola's body, because Nicola was only forty-nine years old, and a man with a wife, children, land, and responsibilities should not die at age forty-nine, even in Carunchio.

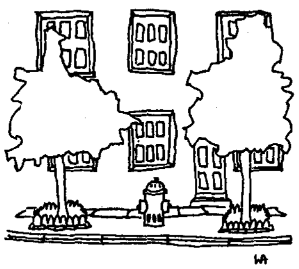
Francese was a good *maestro*, and he knew that it was not *la fattura* in the *liquore fino* which caused Nicola's illness.

"How do you know?" Maria Antonia demanded.

"Because Quirino drank from the same bottle," Francese replied. "They all drank from the bottle. Nicola had no enemies—everyone in Carunchio knows that. There was no poison."

It was a heart attack, he said. But he was virtually helpless, and could do no more than watch Nicola anxiously from the other side of the bedroom while the *mago* continued mumbling and Maria Antonia began her special prayers—prayers that the *carunchiesi* believed were more powerful than any medicine Francese could give them.

Nobody knew when my grandmother, Maria Antonia Valentino, had become a healer. She was born in Carunchio, and when Nicola and his two brothers came to the village from Orsogna, in the northern Abruzzi, her powers were already known. The *carunchiesi* believed she got better results than the *maestro*, and they derived an extra benefit, for Maria Antonia charged nothing. She would take not even a green fig from them, because she felt an obligation that comes only with such power. She was a small, trim woman whose thick, dark, wavy hair had first turned gray and then white as snow, never losing its youthful sheen and substance. She had high cheekbones and dark, deep-set eyes, but, although her face was striking, it was not her face the villagers talked about. It was her hands. Maria Antonia did as much work as any woman, but her hands remained soft, tapered, like those of a very young woman. Unlike a good many others in Carunchio, she was religious, a Roman Catholic. But she also believed that the cause of many illnesses was not something intrinsically wrong with the person who was sick but, rather, the result of *malocchio*. Frequently, to determine what course of action she should take, she would pour some water into a clean dish, and into that a spoonful of olive oil. She would watch how the oil formed beads upon the water, then select her remedy and pray accordingly. When a villager complained of a severe headache, Maria Antonia would say, "It is only because people are jealous of you," and say a prayer. The headache would then go away, so the people of Carunchio believed. If someone's tooth ached, Maria Antonia would pray to Apollonia, whose teeth were knocked out during a riot in Alexandria in 249 A.D. For eye problems, she would seek the aid of St. Lucy. *Santa Lucia* was martyred in Sicily around 300 A.D., and throughout the centuries since healers have invoked her name against diseases of the eyes, not because she was blinded but because of the origin of her name, which suggests light itself.

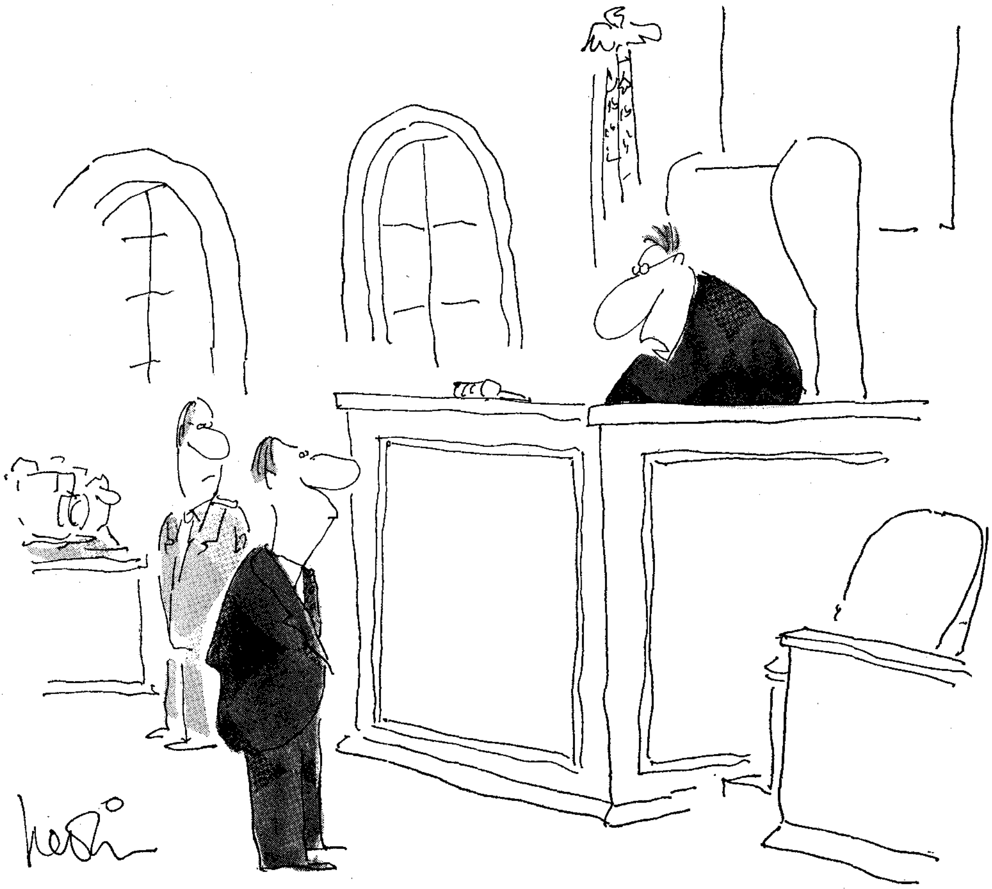


Although *malocchio* is translated as "evil eye" even in sophisticated books about Italian witchcraft, Maria Antonia did not translate it that way, because she did not believe that anyone in Carunchio was evil. If anyone were truly evil, he would not be living in Carunchio, she reasoned, but in Rome or Naples or some great city more suitable for the wasting of life. Rather, she felt that the *malocchio* was the expression of envy—envy of the next farmer's olive trees, of the work of an especially clever seamstress, or perhaps of someone who had a few lire on Saturday night for a little *liquore fino*. That is why she had questioned Francese so closely when he had said there was no poison.

Not every illness was the result of *malocchio*, of course. When my father was around seven years of age, he developed a large boil on his left leg. She put some lard on the boil, wrapped it in a leaf that looked like cabbage but wasn't, said a prayer, and the boil drained the very next day. No *malocchio* at all. On another occasion, a bee stung my father on the tip of his finger while he was in the vineyard. Maria Antonia said, "Quickly, give me your hand," and she readied the knife she had in her basket. My father hesitated at the sight of the knife. He was very young then and had never before been stung by a bee. "Quickly, quickly, my son. I'm only trying to help you." And he gave her his hand. Very gently, Maria Antonia pressed the blade of the knife against the bee sting so as not to break the skin—only enough to make two thin white lines in the form of a cross over the sting. They immediately disappeared, but the very next day, my father recalled, the bump was completely gone. Could Francese have done better?

Maria Antonia had special powers, no doubt of it. But on that Saturday night in May of 1900 poor Nicola died, despite the best efforts of Maria Antonia, Francese, and the *mago*. Francese was sorry—he had always liked Nicola—but there was nothing he could do against a *malattia di cuore*. The *mago* went home, half resenting Francese, because, after all, the *mago* had got there first, and it would have been a very fine thing to save a man as beloved in the village as Nicola. But the power of a *mago* can work only against *la fattura*, and didn't Francese say it was *malattia di cuore*? Not *la fattura* at all.

After Nicola died, it was only fair that Quirino should have the farm, even though he was the second son. It was the logical order of things. Nicola's two brothers had already died of *malattia di cuore*. Nicola's eldest son, Giuseppe, had emigrated to Argentina, and there was no indication from him that he wished to return. Vincenzo and Antonio were already in the Hudson Valley, and surely they would never return to Carunchio from a valley so fertile, even if olive trees would not grow there. Indeed, they had already suggested that the farm be sold and the entire family come to the United States—something that Nicola had not wanted to do. This was his land. True, the olive trees were ancient, but they still bore fruit. He believed that even



"For heaven's sake, man, look ashamed. We're being televised."

• •

a tree that had nurtured a Roman soldier would sustain his family if it was cared for. He fully intended to stay. But now he was gone, and the land must pass to the eldest son remaining, who would soon have a family of his own. Tomaso had no land, thought Maria Antonia, and although he could always stay with Quirino, it was not enough. Yes, there were many *tumuli* of land. But then a *tumulo* in the Abruzzi was not just a form of measurement. It was also the word for grave.

WE reached Carunchio quite late, and we were absolutely exhausted when we checked into the village's only hotel, the Excelsior, for what was to be a four-day stay. We told the proprietor that we did not want our family bothered at such an hour. The next morning, Nicola and Giuseppe, Quirino's two sons, met us at the hotel and took us to their home—the home my father had not seen since the day he and Maria Antonia had gone to Naples to catch their ship to New York fifty-two years before. There's no need to recount what happened at the reunion, except to say that it was not accompanied by the tears you might expect of Italians. If we had spent our time crying, we would not have had time to exchange information about who had gone where, who had returned, who had died, and what had happened to the family for the past half century. We were very disappointed to learn that Quirino himself had died only three months before. He had sent us pictures over the years. Like his father, he was a jolly man, an elegant man. He enjoyed being photographed with his wife, his three sons, his dog, a carafe of red wine with at least two glasses, and his shotgun. I rather think the photographs were his way of assuring us that all was well. It was the display of all he had, and if he was as much like his father as I suspect, he had all he wanted.

Quirino's son Nicola had been in some of the snapshots, and I was eager to meet him. In the nineteen-thirties, when the photographs were made, he looked like a Yale-trained Schenectady lawyer, in a three-piece suit and a conservative tie—a vigorous-looking man with a firm jaw and with hope in his close-set eyes. The day I met him, all that remained was his fondness for vests. He was a quiet and gentle man, but his shoulders were stooped, he had lost his front teeth, and the mountains had not been kind to him. His younger brother, Giuseppe, had in manhood developed diabetes, and was getting his shots from Don Costello personally. The Costello family was, to my family in the nineteenth century, the most important in all Carunchio. After all, they had an arrangement whereby they worked some of Don Costello's land. So I was most interested to hear that the most recent lord, who was just about my father's age, was personally administering insulin shots to Giuseppe. My father remembered him from the early nineteen-hundreds. Then he was called Nicolino—little Nicky, not unlike the Czar of All the Russias—and on those rare occasions when the *contadini* saw him in his horse-drawn carriage with his father, the old don, they doffed their caps.

As a child, I had heard much about Don Costello, whose power had remained much more nearly intact than the Czar's. My father asked about him in the shushy dialect that is *carunchiese*. If they had been speaking the Italian of Tuscany or Lombardy, or of polite Romans, he would have asked, *"Dove sta Don Costello?"* But they were speaking *carunchiese*, and so he asked, *"Do' shta Don Coshtel'?"*

"Shta in Cerret'," somebody replied, which meant he was in Cerreto, which means "oak grove" and is the name of his summer house.

"Bah," said somebody else. It sounds like *ma,* the Italian word for "but," but that is not what it means. It is the rough equivalent of *allore* or *ebbene*, but it seems to have an infinite number of meanings: "Well, now," "Uh-huh," "Is that so?," "You don't say," "Alas," "So be it," "That's life," "I must be going," "Stay well," and other things. At this particular point, it apparently meant that a villager was going to leave the hotel, where we were all talking, to go all the way to Cerreto to tell Don Coshtel' that a son of Nicola and Maria Antonia had returned after an absence of only fifty-two years and had brought his son along. Shortly thereafter, Don Costello's personal secretary, a friendly, personable chap, came to the hotel and informed us that his lord would be most pleased to see us at Cerreto at ten o'clock the next morning.

We spent a very enjoyable afternoon at the hotel with our family. The food—enormous platters of antipasto, pasta, chicken *cacciatore*, and homemade bread—and a great deal of a superb homemade red wine was all supplied by Nicola and Giuseppe, who brought it to the hotel, since there would never have been enough room in their home for so many people. We feasted in great style, and then our

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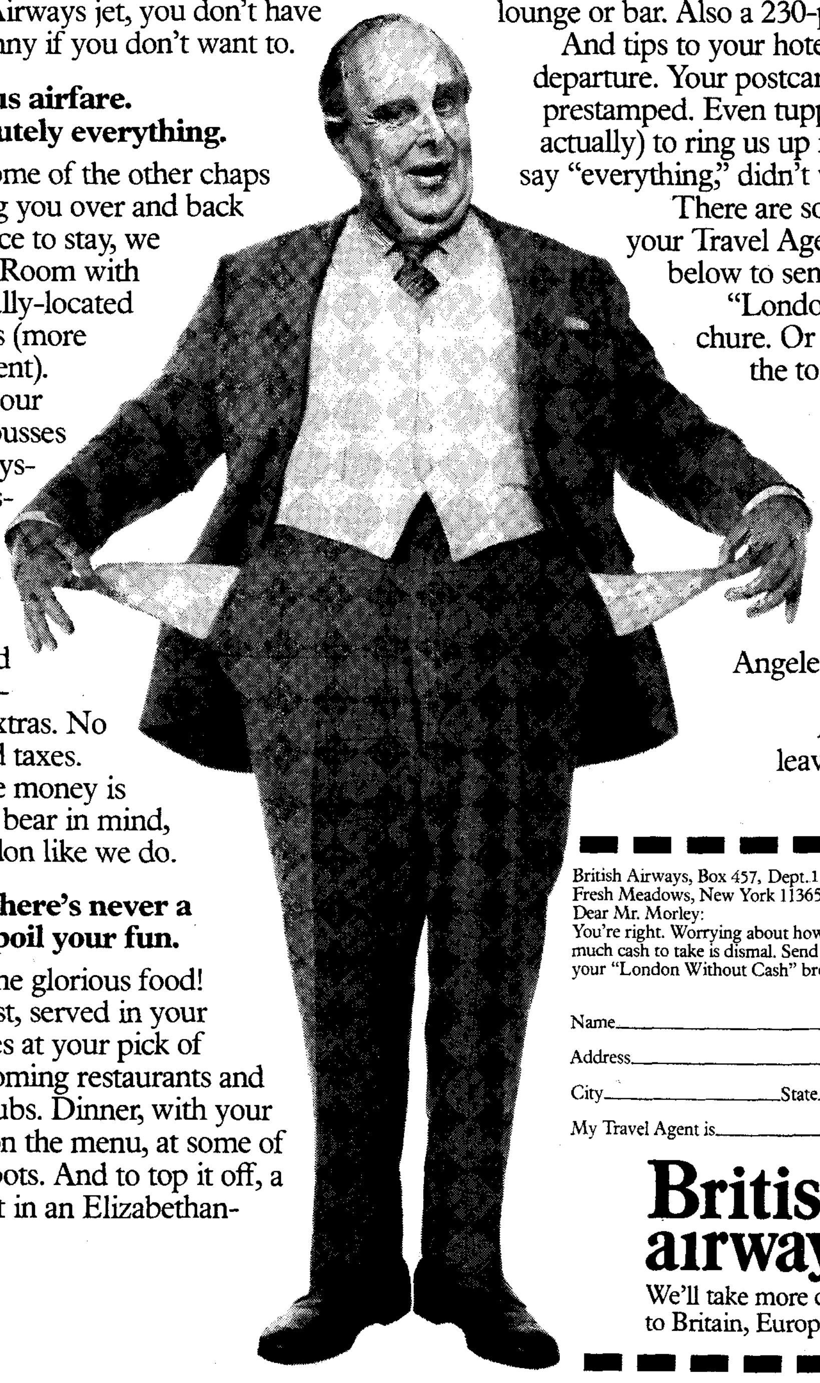

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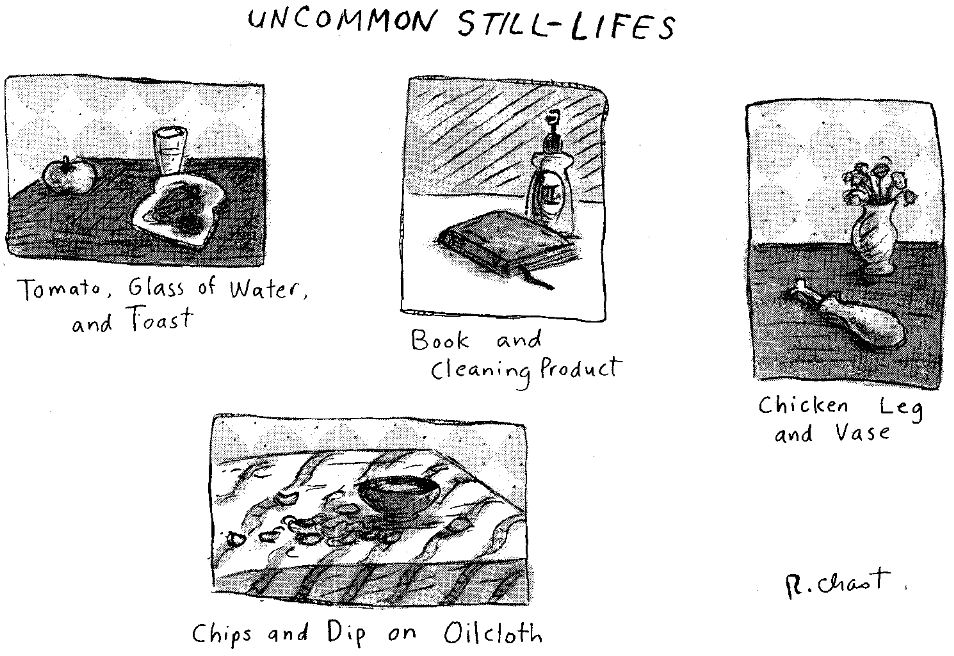
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paesani came down the hill from the village in small groups to greet us and share a little *liquore fino* with us. After a while, the innkeeper turned on his television set, one of the two or three in the village. There was a remarkably good signal that day from Campobasso, in Molise, and the stellar attraction was Perry Como. Mr. Como is very popular with the *abruzzesi*, who know that his ancestors were of that region, and not believing in Perry Como is like not believing that some olive trees may live forever. The Italians had not dubbed the show, and it ran in the original English, without subtitles. It was thus totally incomprehensible to almost everyone in the room.

I knew that the *abruzzesi* were fond of all kinds of music, so I asked the man sitting next to me what he thought of Frank Sinatra, for I knew that Mr. Sinatra's family was not *abruzzese*.

"He is all right, but I hear he has a temper," the man replied. "This man Como is tranquil and sweet, and he sings well enough."

When the *abruzzesi* talk of music for any length of time, they invariably mention La Banda Rossa, their famous concert ensemble, which has appeared in the United States. Some of it has disappeared in the United States, too, say the *abruzzesi*. Legend has it that in the early years of this century La Banda Rossa came to New York, played well, but lost several musicians to American wealth and women. The clarinet section was reportedly hardest hit.

In late afternoon, I walked up to the main square, just to see it. Carunchio is an unremarkable Italian hill town, with nineteenth- and twentieth-century whitewash, stucco, and red tile masking a medieval building code, and it sits atop what was probably a settlement five hundred years before Christ. The street leading up the steep hill to the square contains steps; it would have been most difficult to get chariots up there, and good archers above would have had an easy time with an invading army. The church was on the piazza, and behind it was Don Costello's in-town residence, which the *carunchiesi* in my father's time called Palazzo Coshtel'. It was more of a *casa signorile* than a *palazzo*, but in the Abruzzi they do not have the Tuscan mania for finding the correct word—if they did, they might have to call some of their own homes not *case* but *casuccie*, or, even worse, *casupole*—and nobody wants to call his home a hovel, even though the Italian word may sound more lyrical than its English equivalent.

During the Second World War, the Fascists came to Carunchio, and dedicated a large fountain and headstone to Mussolini. It was guarded by an ornamental iron fence in front and a hill in back. On one side of the stone the inscription read, "*Viva Il Duce*," and on the other, "*Viva Il Fascismo*." A picture postcard was made of this—the first, I believe, in Carunchio's history. Well into the early nineteen-fifties, the *carunchiesi* were sending the Fascist postcards to shocked relatives in the United States. That was not because the village was especially Fascist during the war or neo-Fascist after the war. The *carunchiesi* are apolitical, and would welcome almost any political ideology into their midst provided it did not try to govern them. The postcards were a source of pride. They meant that Carunchio had taken its place beside Rome in offering cards that showed a fountain. I must admit, however, that I was relieved to see that the signs had finally been taken down. On that afternoon, men were playing bocce in a nearby court, and I started over to watch them. A girl of about thirteen or fourteen years of age, with hair the color of chestnuts and eyes green enough to rival the Tyrrhenian at Ravello, crossed my path. She was dressed in her Sunday best. "So," she said. "You are the visitor. Where were you before you came here?" She spoke a nice, clear Italian, slowly. Praise be, someone I could talk to easily.

"Well, we flew to Milan and we rented a car . . ."

"Wait a minute. Where is Milan?"

"Way up north. East of Turin, west of Venice."

She studied me. "You mean these places are in Italy?"

We talked for nearly an hour, and, in my flawed Italian, I described the cities I had seen, the great churches and doors wrought of bronze, buildings where there were pictures painted on the ceiling, and squares so large that all of Carunchio could fit into one corner. It was Venice that most fascinated her. A city built on the water where they used gold to make glass of red.

When I was her age, I knew where Venice was. I even knew where Albany was. That much was provided me by unfancy schools in a Hudson Valley mill town. This girl was bright, curious, and alert. And she knew nothing about Italy. The Lex Julia had conferred citizenship on the *abruzzesi* in 90 B.C., and, forgive me, I wondered if the bureaucrats in Rome had ever been told about it.

I asked the men in the bocce game about the girl with the green eyes and the chestnut hair, and they said she was a good girl, went to school, respected her elders, and never got into mischief. They saw me looking up at *La Maiella*, and they told me they heard that Romans paid good money to go there just to walk.

It was raining on the third day of our visit when we were taken to Cerreto, a pleasant villa, for our meeting with Don Costello. His wife was attractive, correct, and brave. It was difficult enough for her to be away from her native Tuscany without having representatives of *la piccola possidenza* traipsing the spring mud into her home.

Don Costello was about my father's age and, like him, was a small man,

1931

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fastidious and affable. After telling my father he remembered him well, he turned to me, smiled, and asked me how I earned my living. I faltered; I wasn't sure how to say "Associated Press," which is where I then worked. In Spanish, *prensa* means "press" journalistically, but the Italian word that sounds most similar, *pressa*, never means journalism. It is what a tailor uses to make a crease in your trousers. I felt awkward in hesitating; I did not want the lord of Carunchio to think that my Italian was even worse than I knew it to be. The right word came to me: *stampa.*

"Lavoro per l'Agenzia Stampa Associata, si chiama 'the Associated Press,' " I said slowly, and then, in supreme folly, I tried to explain to him what the Associated Press is, even though I am not sure I can do that in English.

"We are an association of newspapers, a coöperative that is not for profit," I began.

"Eh? Non per profitto? Un negozio senza profitto? È vero? Sicuramente, non è possibile."

I tried to explain it, failing miserably, because Don Costello had heard that in the United States, as in Italy, reporters were nothing more than *uccelli rapaci*—birds of prey—who would certainly find a way to make a profit, whatever they told the government and the unsuspecting public they were doing.

My father and Don Costello then exchanged amenities, during which Don Costello said that the war was bad and all wars are bad. My father quickly agreed, but he pointed out that the Great War had enabled him to obtain his American citizenship, in Manhattan, Kansas.

"Si dice 'Manhattan, Kansas,' " repeated Don Costello, emphasizing the name of the state. He did not say he thought that Manhattan was a place in New York, and I sensed that he felt that his knowledge of geography was being assaulted, but it would not have been polite to volunteer information to a man as well travelled as Don Costello. It was a pleasant meeting, and after it we returned to our family. Too late, I realized that I had forgotten to ask Don Costello about the insulin shots for Giuseppe.

The man at the Excelsior plotted a route back to Rome not using the Via Tiburtina but another way, which made you think you were going to Naples but no, you could turn off on the Via Casilina and it was much easier. No doubt that's the way Roman bureaucrats had come. It was a good trip but not un-

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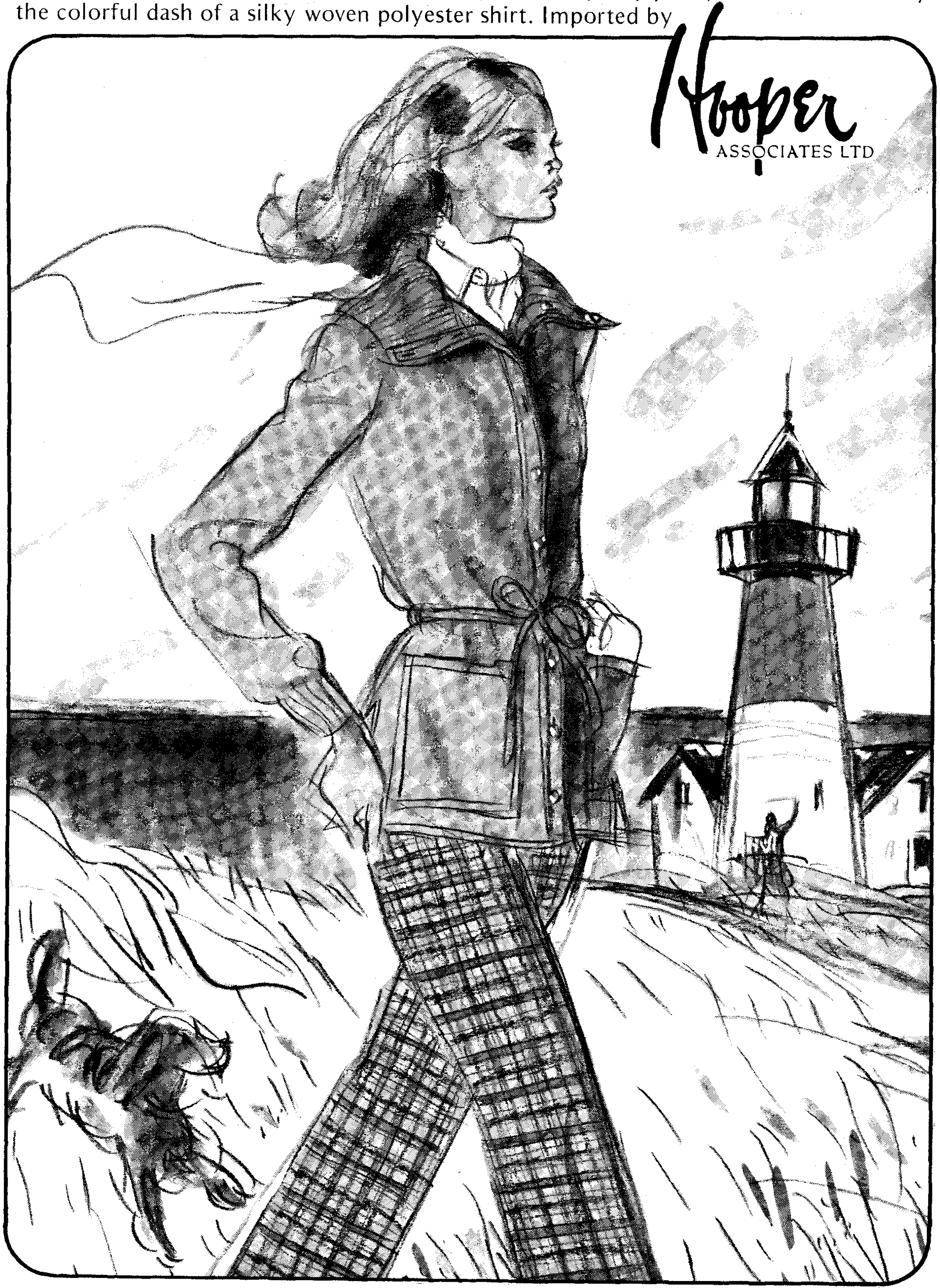

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flawed. We promised to sponsor my cousin Eugenio, Nicola's son, in the United States—a promise we did not keep because my mother felt that my father was already too old to make such commitments and I convinced myself I did not have the financial resources, with a job that paid seventy-five dollars a week. A millennium or two from now, if anyone does a history of Carunchio, it will be written in the stones that I failed Eugenio and thus broke the ancient tradition of *paesano* helping *paesano*. It is not a failure I bear easily.

"I come from an ancient breed," D'Annunzio wrote of his origins. "My ancestors were anchorites on the Maiella. They flagellated themselves till the blood came. They filled their fists with snow and ate it; they throttled wolves; they stripped eagles of their feathers, and scratched their seals on giant rocks."

THERE was promise of an early spring in Kansas. Most of the snow had melted, and dirt roads that had been rock hard only a week before had now turned to mud. I had just arrived for my first visit ever, and I had finally met my cousins Anna and Charles—the last two surviving children of Joe White, and the only members of my family left who remembered my father during his Kansas years. It was nineteen years after our visit to the Abruzzi, and I sat alone on a hilltop three-quarters of a mile north of White Cloud and looked down at the farmhouse that had been claimed and rebuilt nearly a century before by Nicola and Giuseppe Loreto, who had become Nick and Joe White. It was the house where, more thoroughly than anyplace else, my family had been able to make the transition from a special kind of Italian feudalism—primitive, yet restrictive—to a special kind of American ruralism that was just as primitive yet remarkably free-wheeling for foreigners, if they could escape the great cities or other places where their own kind were clustered. Great cities may be the mortar of civilization, but in the history of American immigration they have also been the most abrasive gristmills of assimilation. It was in the cities that newcomers were shunted off into neighborhoods that in later years became quaint happy hunting grounds for adventurous native-born whites seeking restaurants or artisans. Little Italys are now wonderful backdrops for television news reporters, who inexplicably wish to interview people buying and selling sausage sandwiches; and they are presented as the places where Italian culture was preserved. In truth, the Little Italys quickly lost the language and culture of the immigrants, and for me they represent places where large groups of newcomers found themselves initially barred from the American values to which they aspired.

But if parts of rural America had been so kind, why did I wait nineteen years after that first trip to Italy to take the next step and visit the Kansas my father had told me about? I sat on the hilltop in the snow. One moment, it was a perch that was a century away in a central Italian hill town. Next moment, I felt closer to it than I did to my own Hudson Valley—pressed upon it, as though the farmhouse and I were on the back side of an American coin or in a W.P.A. mural on a post-office wall. This was the very place that had nurtured my father with such sweetness through so many years, and perhaps I had not come sooner because I was afraid it did not really exist, afraid there had never been a village of wooden sidewalks filled with uprooted Indians, or an Uncle Joe who somehow kept a family intact and still satisfied his own restlessness with forays into the Wild West. It is, at the very least, dangerous to take vacations on another man's memories and dreams, even if he is your father.

We had driven up from Lawrence—Cousin Anna, Joe White's youngest daughter, and Cousin Charles, Uncle Joe's youngest son, who lives in the farmhouse with his wife. Lawrence is where Anna had lived for many years, and where our little family reunion had taken place upon my arrival in Kansas. Rather like the one in Carunchio, it had been characterized by what seemed to be one unending meal and the rapid exchange of information.

I had deliberately spoken to Charles alone and to Anna alone. I was impressed that they could remember people, legends, and the family history my father had told me about with the same minute detail, even though I asked them about some things they may not have thought about for many years. I had always been suspicious of oral history, but they destroyed the notion that if it isn't written down it somehow becomes hopelessly distorted or has no value.

When we arrived in White Cloud, they put me up in the same room my father had used more than sixty years before. The outside of the house was much as it had always been, except there were more windows. Before he died, in 1948, Uncle Joe had been able to expand the original twenty acres to two hundred and forty acres, half of which are now rented out to farmers who plant wheat and corn. The bottomland is rich, thanks to the Missouri.

The next afternoon, Charles and I drove into White Cloud. We stopped at the foot of Main Street, at about the point where the rowboat had taken bourbon drinkers to the promised land sixty years before, and I looked for the first time at the town I had heard so much about when I was a seven-year-old in the blue-gray Nash. Main Street was paved, but so much mud had been tracked into town that it looked like the dirt road it had been when my father ran his tiny barbershop.

Charles knew what I wanted to see. "It was up here, on the right," he said, pointing to where the shack of a barbershop had been until quite recently. The concrete front step remained—the step on which my father stands in a photograph in the family album, looking out on a street that in those days was filled with farmers, Indians, and salesmen from Kansas City, St. Joseph, and St. Louis carrying fat catalogues, great bolts of cloth, and saws and axes and scythes into three general stores—a street filled with men on horseback and families in wagons and smelling of the inevitable manure.

I looked hard at the near-empty street. Materializing before my eyes was a man on horseback, riding easily. White Cloud had suddenly become a time machine, and I found myself looking to where Pete Lear's hotel had been, half wondering what else from the past would manifest itself. But this was no time machine after all; the man on horseback was a local farmer. He greeted Charles as he rode by.

We walked around Main Street, and Charles casually but clinically began to tell me what had happened to White Cloud since my father left it in 1918. "We had three general stores, but now there's only one left and that's Kelley's. Let's see—we had two doctors, a dentist, two blacksmiths, a pharmacist, and two barbers, and now they're all gone."

"Where do you get haircuts?" I asked.

"The nearest barbers are in Hiawatha, Troy, or Falls City—all of them about twenty miles away. There's also a vet in Hiawatha. We don't have one here anymore."

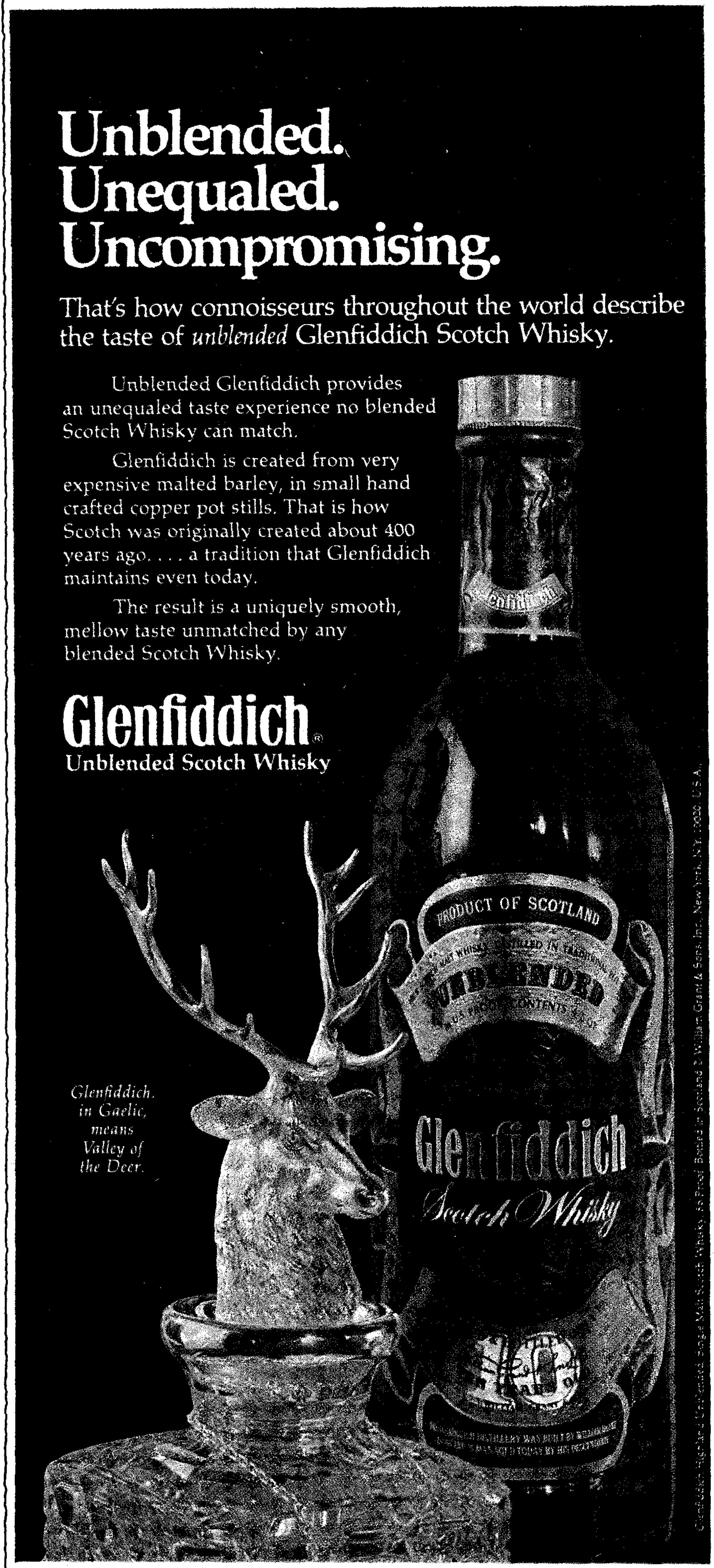
White Cloud had also lost its only hardware store, its only bakery, its only undertaker, its only furniture store, and its only lumberyard. Gone, too, is the jail; all that remains of it is the water pump outside of what used to be the front door. A senior citizens' center was being built in what used to be Marker's Undertaking Parlor. An early bank, which was situated in what used to be a harness shop, has also vanished, but its vault is still there. The schoolhouse has become the Ma-Hush-Kah Museum, and White Cloud's children now go to a school in Highland, ten miles away.

White Cloud had a population of more than seven hundred and fifty when my father lived there; now its year-round population is about half that. It's unclear why there should be such a decline. Of course, when Nick and Joe White originally went there, White Cloud was probably still enjoying the residual benefit from its proximity to the route of the Pony Express, the Overland Trail, and the Oregon Trail, which were not far south of it. But the town's position wasn't helped much when the Atchison-Rulo branch of the Burlington Railroad went out of business and a highway was put down where the tracks used to be.

Charles pointed out the Indian Health Clinic, and I noticed that the American Indian Library Book Bus had come to town on its monthly visit, bringing books for the Kickapoo, Potawatomi, Ioway, Sac, and Fox Indians. A great many Indians live in ranch-style houses around White Cloud. There are a lot of other kinds of architecture to be seen, too—an imposing French-style brick house, and other houses with spacious porches that reminded me of the gracious, older homes in the Hudson Valley. Quite a few were for sale, Charles told me. The prices would be modest.

Near the foot of Main Street there is a wooden arcade over the sidewalk, and you have to keep reminding yourself that the sidewalks are not wooden, as they were when my father lived there, but concrete. They led all the way to the school, and Charles well remembers walking on them. He pointed out the door to the old Opera House, where a black piano player named Blind Boone used to perform often to packed audiences.

There was evidence of religiosity, past and present. On the north side of Main Street there is a marker, dedicated in May of 1933, to honor Wilbur Chapman, who in 1908, at age ten, "raised and sold a pig 'Pete' to help support a leper boy. His example started the Pig Bank Movement. 100,000 banks have been distributed to date. 'Feeding' these banks is help-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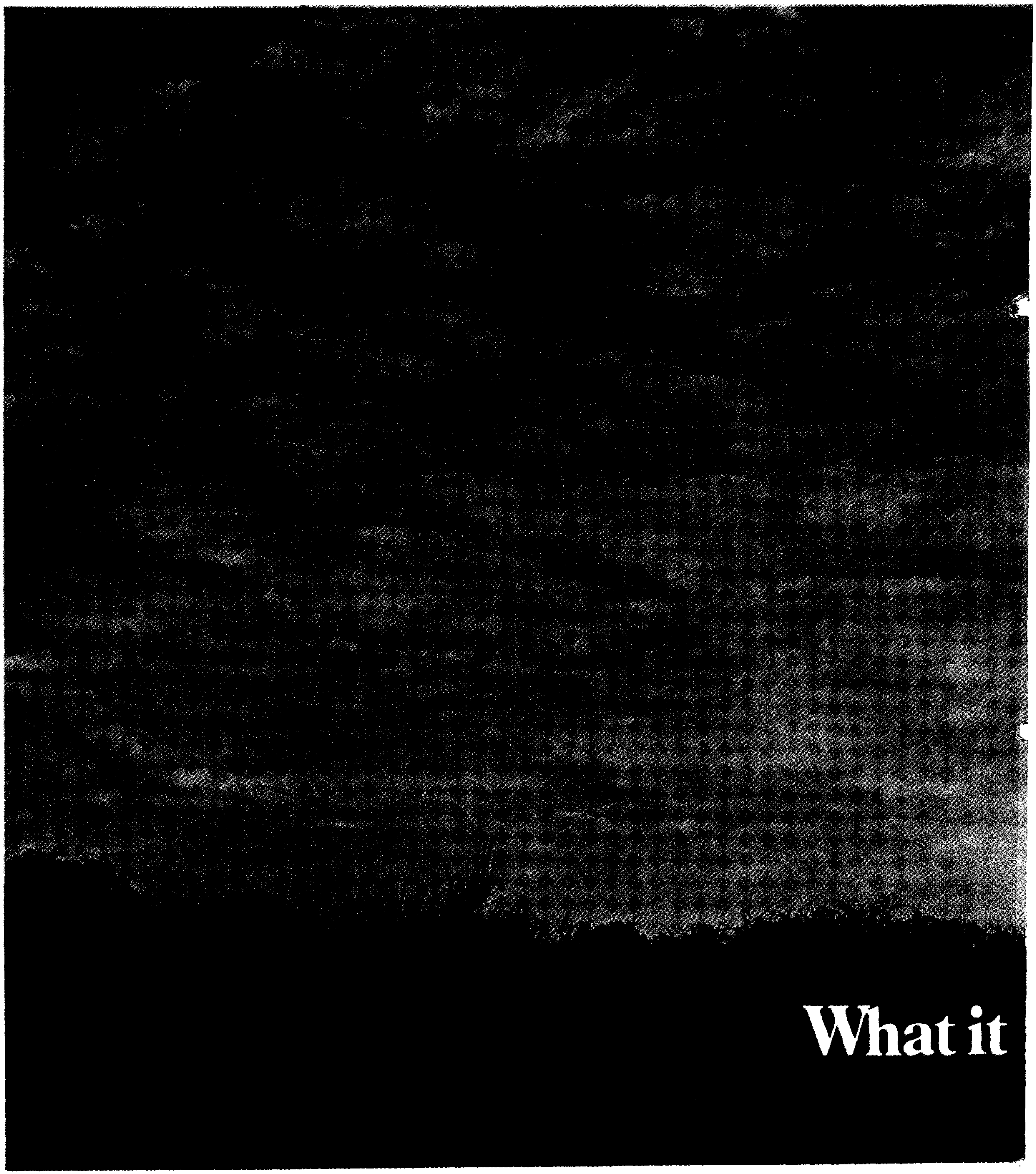

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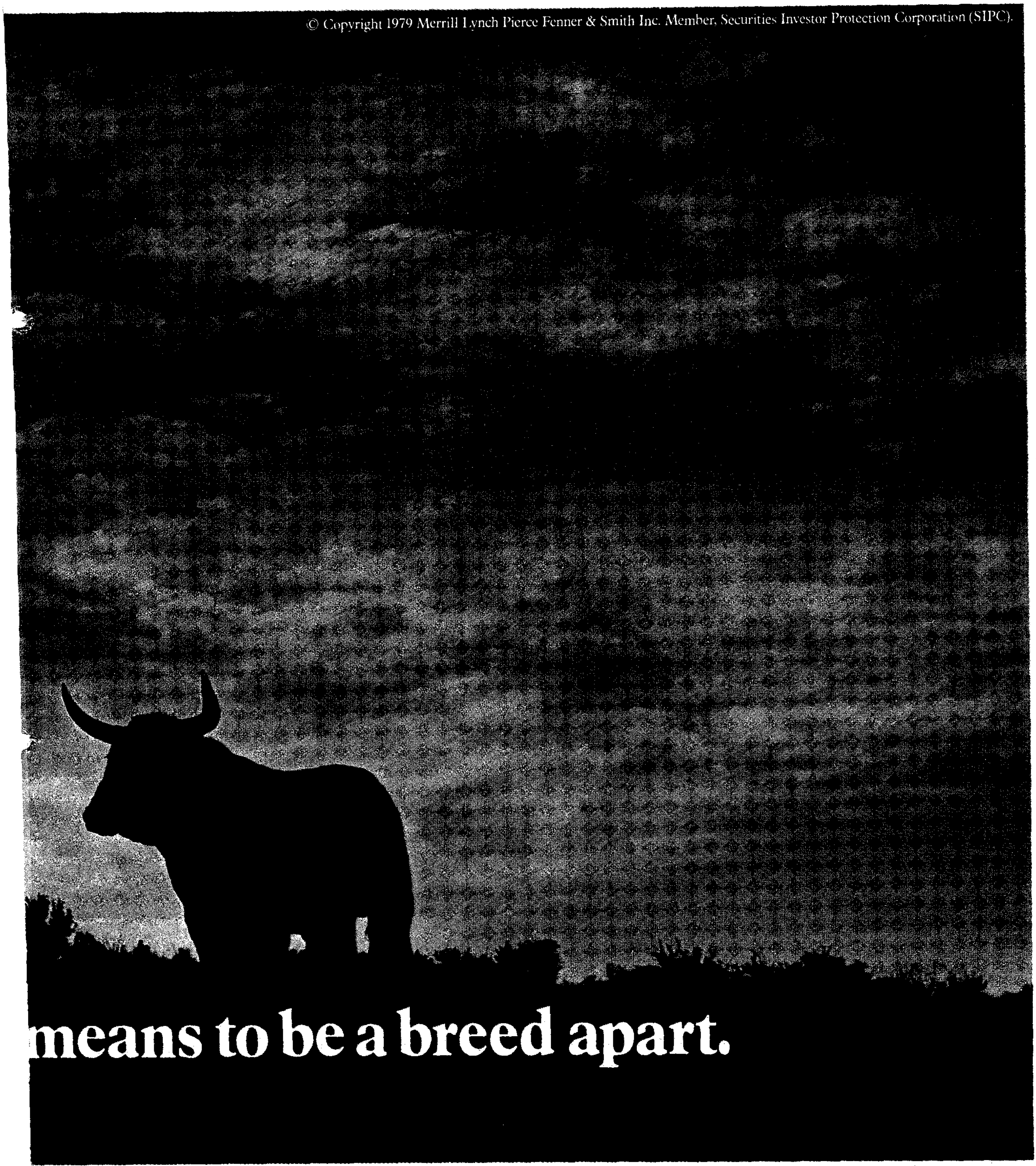

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ing rid the world of leprosy and is carrying out Christ's command: 'Cleanse the lepers.' "

White Cloud's current Christian efforts are pointed in other directions. A sign in a window advised that the Ma-Hush-Kah Historical Society would hold its seventeenth annual flea market ("Rain or Shine—If It Rains on Yours . . . It Rains on Mine"). In addition to the buying and selling of all kinds of country antiques and other goods, the flea market was to offer "worship services to be held in the church at 10:00 A.M. and 11:00 A.M."

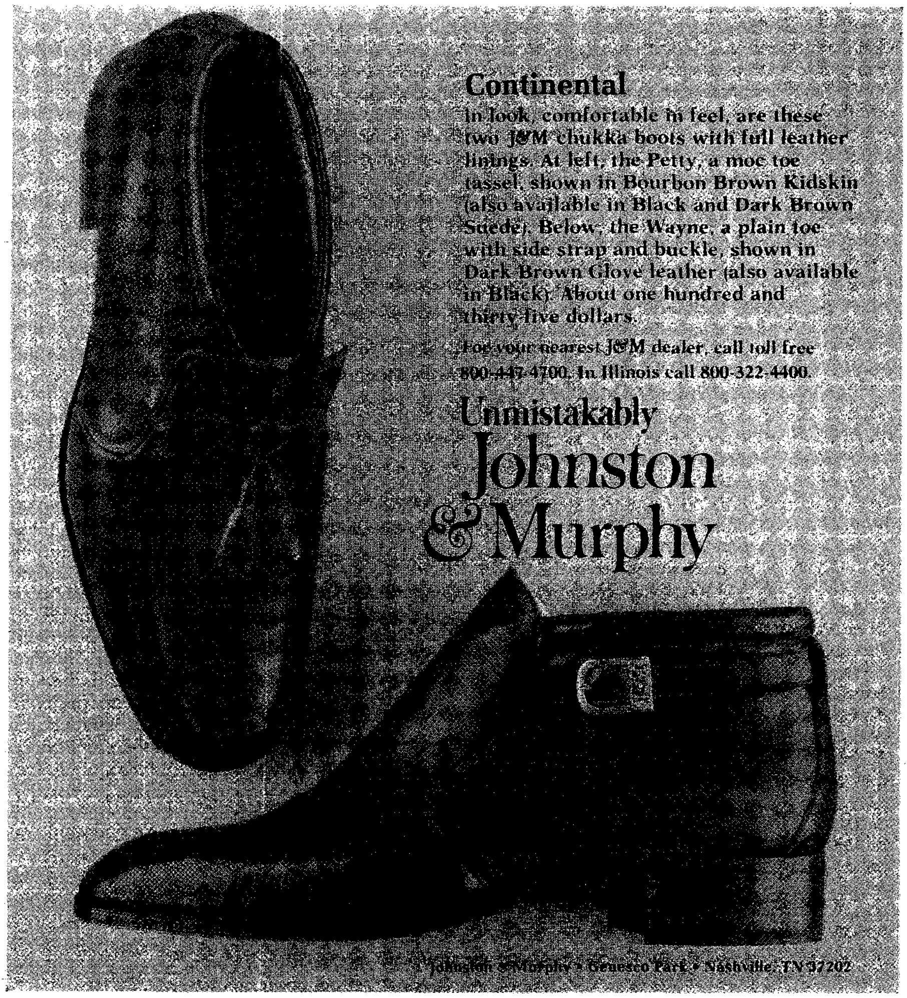
Charles wanted to take me up to Hilltop Park, which offers a fine view of Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska, and Kansas, but it was too muddy for that. And so we went to the cemetery and looked at the graves of my childhood legends. I found it difficult to believe that those people were really in their graves, yet the graves gave them a substance they did not have when they were just legends in the Marlboro hills.

The graves were as much an affirmation of life as of death. Nevertheless, it is a strange thing to go to a graveyard and first meet the relatives you grew up with: Anna Rosa, patient and aloof; Uncle Joe, the adventurer who gave the Kansas branch of the family tremendous stability, a sense of identity, and a permanent stake in the hills and rich bottomland of the Missouri River; and, of course, there was Little Joe.

We drove back into White Cloud. I did not return to the farm in the car with Charles. Instead, I took one last walk around Main Street and came back to what had been the front step of the barbershop. Very carefully, I chipped away a small piece of the concrete and put it in my pocket to bring it back to the Hudson Valley, for my father. Then I walked back up to the farm.

WHITE CLOUD, like Carunchio, is dying, but neither will ever die. There will always be people, be their stock Samnite or Sac or *anglosassone*, who are self-regulating, self-sufficient, self-entertaining, laudably stubborn, indifferent to the rise and fall of great cities, who take comfort in isolation.

I came away from both places not feeling depressed at their steady loss of people and commerce, as I am when I think about our cities. Rather, I was proud that I actually had ancestors and relatives who could survive with grace in the wilderness. I was envious, too, because I doubt my own ability to live in one of those places, even though I confess to a great weakness for soli-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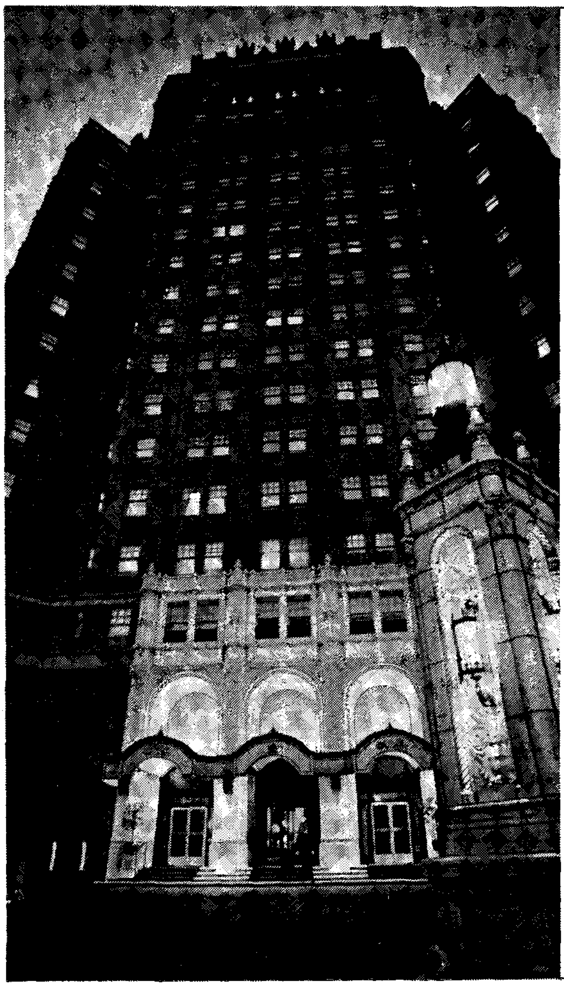
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tude. I am only a generation removed from people who could make flowers grow out of rocks and bid God let fig trees bear sweet fruit in New York State, but they had talents I can only admire, and never possess. They knew lords and wizards on mountaintops, had the wisdom to heal themselves, and to be their own teachers, and to give haircuts to warriors who did not know war. They made music where there was none, they danced and drank wine when their overseers warned them not to. They confronted alien cultures, conquered and were conquered, and emerged somehow with an uncommon innocence left intact. They did not become cynical, because cynicism springs from idealism, and the *abruzzesi* are given not to idealism but, rather, to an admixture of pragmatism and innocence. My family arrived here in an age of outward innocence in America. The original people from the mountains brought to it an inward innocence that they still have not lost. Perhaps that is why I went back. It was not important for me to establish a family tree, and I did not go to the Maiella or the Missouri River to look for my roots. Rather, I think I was looking for my own innocence, and instead found theirs.

Last summer, my father and I went bass fishing at a little pond in Putnam County. It had been raining, but now the afternoon sun was beginning to burn through the clouds that covered the Hudson Valley, and out came the damselflies and dragonflies. The dragonflies flew in tandem; they were looking for midges and having more luck than we were in our quest for smallmouth bass. It was all so pleasant that I did not notice that a bee had flown into the pocket of my jeans. It stung me when I put my hand in the pocket.

My father then did something I had never seen him do before. He quickly opened his fishing knife and said, "Here, give me your hand."

My forefinger was red and swelling rapidly. He took the finger in his hand and, with the blade of his knife, gently, so as not to break the skin, made two little white lines crossing each other over the sting in the redness. —RICHARD SEVERO

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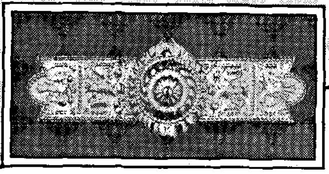
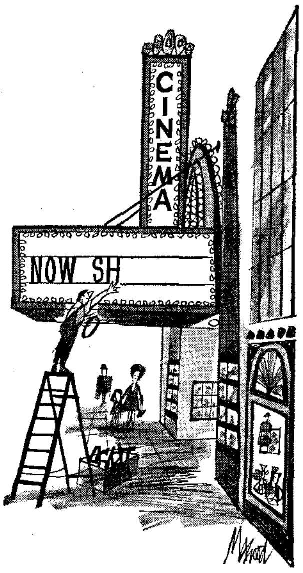


THE CURRENT CINEMA

"Mistah Kurtz—He Dead"



VIEWED as a conventional updating of Joseph Conrad's "Heart of Darkness"—like one of those attempts to make "Crime and Punishment" meaningful by setting it in the United States in the nineteen-fifties or to make a movie about interracial marriage universal by using the plot of "Othello"—"Apocalypse Now" looks like not much more than a cannibalization. For better and for worse, the movie confirms the idea that a work of art consists of local particulars. To use somebody else's work of art as a skeleton, you first have to turn it into a skeleton. Where "Apocalypse Now" is least successful (the last half hour), it seems to have been made by people who have read Conrad with their teeth. Where it is amazingly successful (the first two hours), it takes least from Conrad—or, rather, it takes subtly and delicately, for form and inspiration. The journey upriver through a place of evil (in Conrad, a dark continent ravaged by ivory-mad white traders; in the movie, Vietnam) is a beautiful, classical structure. Francis Coppola's direction breaks it, with long, fluid set pieces of horror, into equivalents of the long, fluid paragraphs of the speech of Conrad's Marlow telling "one of [his] inconclusive experiences." The movie is inconclusive not in the sense that it is meaningless but in the sense that it refuses to interpret itself as it goes along. Coppola at his best does not let us remove ourselves one safe step from what is happening on the screen to the *meaning* of what is happening on the screen. Coppola has the "weakness"—as "Heart of Darkness" ironically calls it—of Marlow: "the weakness of many tellers of tales who seem so often unaware of what their audience would best like to hear." Audiences seem uncertain about how to respond to "Apocalypse Now." Perhaps they come in with too much awe or cynicism; or perhaps because Coppola has spent thirty million dollars they expect what he spent it on to be doing all the work. Both times I saw the movie, there were nervous titters, more or less respectfully suppressed, every time it moved into a surprising tone. I reacted this way the first time through, and now think I was wrong to mistrust my laughter. I don't know what "Apocalypse Now" is in its entirety (and I am not sure Coppola does), but for most of the way it is the blackest comedy I have ever seen on the screen, taking its spirit and tone not from Conrad but from—this is the shortest way to say it—Michael Herr.

Herr's reporting from Vietnam (collected in his book "Dispatches") shows us a war that justifies Baudelaire's statement "The comic is one of the clearest Satanic signs of man": people living through Vietnam as pulp adventure fantasy, as movie, as stoned humor, as a collage that Herr once saw in a helicopter gunner's house, on a wall near a poster of Lenny Bruce—a map of the western United States with Vietnam reversed and fitted over California. Other reporters brought back pieces of the same picture, but "Apocalypse Now" seems indebted to the special intensity of Herr's vision of the heart of the Vietnam War's darkness as "that joke at the deepest part of the blackest kernel of fear."

Herr also wrote the movie's narration. It is spoken as a voice-over by Martin Sheen, as Captain Benjamin Willard, and expectations that Willard will be someone like Marlow may account for the first waves of nervous tittering. His first words in the movie are "Saigon. Shit." Willard talks in the easy ironies, the sin-city similes, the weary, laconic, why-am-I-even-bothering-to-tell-you language of the pulp private eye. "I hardly said a word to my wife until I said yes to a divorce. . . . I'm here a week now, waiting for a mission, getting softer. . . . Everyone gets everything he wants. I wanted a mission. And for my sins they gave me one. Brought it up to me like room service. . . . How many people had I already killed? There were those six I knew about for sure. . . . Charging a man with murder in this place was like handing out speeding tickets at the Indy 500. . . . Cut 'em in half with a machine gun and give 'em a Band-Aid. It was a lie." (Herr's style in "Dispatches" is not innocent of a certain amount of macho attitude-striking, but he clearly knows you don't write the way Willard talks and mean it. And he shows a flair for parody in a mock dispatch from an old-guy reporter: ". . . like your kid or your brother or your sweetheart maybe never wanted much for himself never asked for anything except for what he knew to be his some men have a name for it and they call it Courage.") Our first look at Willard is the classic opening of the private-eye movie: his face seen upside down, a cigarette stuck to his lip, under a rotating ceiling fan (all this superimposed on a dreamlike scene of helicopters brushing across the screen, a row of palm trees suddenly bursting into flame), and then the camera moving in tight closeup over his books, snapshots, bottle of brandy, cigarettes, Zippo, and, finally, obligatory revolver on the rumpled bedsheets. This guy is not Marlow. He is a parody—maybe a self-created one—of Philip Marlowe, Raymond Chandler's L.A. private eye.

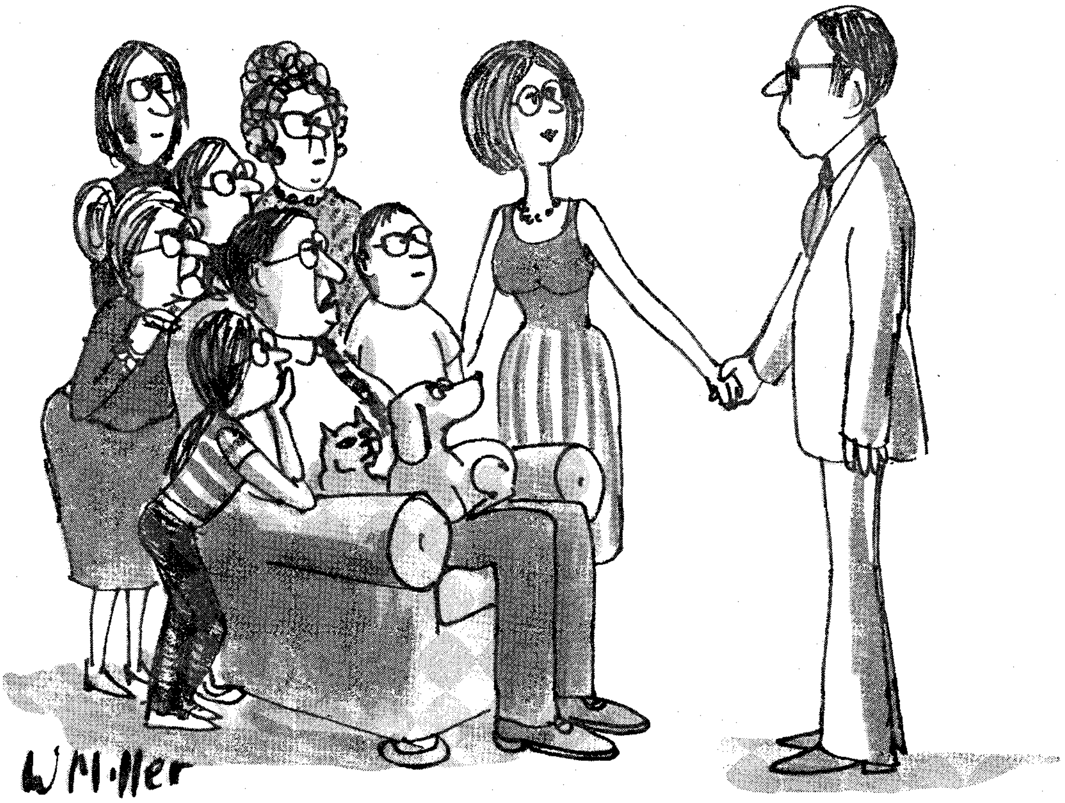
The scene where Willard gets his mission—to travel upriver to Cambodia and kill Colonel Kurtz (Marlon Brando)—has pulp overtones, too. The studied business with dossiers and tapes; the comic-strip-inset closeup of a photograph being passed from hand to hand; the B-movie readings of lines derived from Conrad (G. D. Spradlin, a fine actor, as the general: "His ideas . . . methods . . . became . . . unsound") and of lines that could only come from a B-movie (Spradlin again: "Out there with these natives, it must be a temptation to play God"); the sinister, silent, vaguely Oriental-looking civilian (Jerry Ziesmer) who finally delivers the most evasive bit of bureaucratic jargon—it is all so carefully poised between real men and the trash-adventure-fiction sources of their posturing that we don't know which came first, or in which category to respond. When the young colonel (Harrison Ford), whose nervous throat-clearing shades slightly toward the comic, says that Kurtz's Montagnard followers worship him to the point where they "follow every order, however ridiculous," the word "ridiculous" is so off that it starts another wave of tittering. (Listen, you Montagnards, I know this is going to sound *really silly* . . .) You can almost see the line in a dialogue balloon above Ford's head. The movie is getting the feel of a "Sgt. Fury" comic book with almost no distortion. When we hear

Colonel Kurtz's voice on tape—"I watched a snail crawling along the edge of a straight razor. That's my dream"—it sounds like a description of the scene, in more ways than one. The pace of the scene is painfully slow. It is the pace of Willard's perception of whatever is not war; and how very slow that is we cannot know until we experience the speeding intensity of what follows.

With the first of its war scenes, "Apocalypse Now" becomes a horror comedy. It is what "Dr. Strangelove" might have been after the bomb fell, except that the comedy is not exaggerated and detached from suffering in a way that tells us we may safely laugh; it is realistic, and it exists simultaneously with realistic horror rendered with the physical brilliance and amplitude of "2001." The horror is not drained off, as it is by the easy absurdism of "The Deer Hunter," into a symbolic game; and the comedy is not drained off, as it is by the wordplay of "Catch-22," into a cute craziness. Robert Duvall's Lieutenant Colonel Kilgore (a "Strangelove" name if there ever was one; it would not surprise me to learn that it jumped out at the screenwriters from the page in "Dispatches" that mentions Kilgore, Texas), who leads an Air Cavalry attack on a Vietnamese village, is balanced on a razor edge between "Strangelove" 's Buck Turgidson and a real man emulating Patton. Kilgore is not, like Turgidson, a caricature; he is someone who has internalized a caricature. His surrealistic excesses are generated not by the demands of comedy but by demands from inside a realistic character. Kilgore is a mutant. These war scenes, in their horror and comedy, and their relentless beauty, get at something Michael Herr described: "Maybe you couldn't love the war and hate it inside the same instant, but sometimes those feelings alternated so rapidly that they spun together in a strobic wheel rolling all the way up until you were literally High On War, like it said on all the helmet covers."

There are three such extraordinary sequences in the movie, progressing from deadly efficiency controlled by Kilgore's authority to chaos controlled by no one. They are not parallels to passages in Conrad but reimaginings of what he described as "imbecile rapacity," as "an inextricable mess of things decent in themselves but that human folly made look like the spoils of thieving," and as "black shadows of disease and starvation, lying confusedly in the greenish gloom . . . in all the attitudes of pain, abandonment, and despair." In the third of these sequences, in an incident almost identical to one reported by Herr, a black Marine (Herb Rice) with a ghostly unchanging stare and a kind of psychic aim uses a hand-decorated grenade launcher to kill a Vietnamese who is some distance from the bunker. In Herr's account, the Vietnamese is screaming with pain, trapped and wounded on the wire surrounding the outpost; in the movie, he is taunting the Marines with obscenities. In this transformation of mutual suffering into revenge—and in a fourth scene, the so-called puppy-sampan scene, in which Willard takes the view that when you start something, you have to finish it, however brutally—I thought I detected the tooth and claw of John Milius (who wrote the screenplay with Coppola, and who was responsible for the screenplays of "Jeremiah Johnson," "The Life and Times of Judge Roy Bean," and, with Michael Cimino—director of "The Deer Hunter"—"Magnum Force"). But Milius's adulation of violence and will seems to have mostly been held to its proper place by Coppola. Willard is not Marlow: his narration does not have a deep historical perspective, and it is spoken in a psychological state as numbed as the one he is in on the screen. He is not even Marlowe: he is not above the garish evil that surrounds him. Where Willard is pitiless, "Apocalypse Now" is not. The men on the boat, whom we get to know (Frederic Forrest, Albert Hall, Sam Bottoms, and Larry Fishburne), keep the movie from spiralling off into the impersonal, and we suffer for everyone in it. Though this is a matter of instinct, it seems to me that "Apocalypse Now" earns every second of its display of evil, because it has coherence, truthfulness, and conviction—up to a point.

The point is Kurtz. By the time Willard reaches Kurtz, Coppola has not made a movie version of "Heart of Darkness;" he has made his own movie—one in a class with Lina Wertmüller's "Seven Beauties," not just in its somewhat different use of comedy and horror but in its refusal to go for generalizations instead of particulars. Kurtz, the biggest, fattest temptation to generalization in English literature, has no more place in Coppola's movie than Raskolnikov or Othello. Yet he is the only character Coppola takes literally—right down to his name—from Conrad. Maybe Coppola thought he could show us not just evil but



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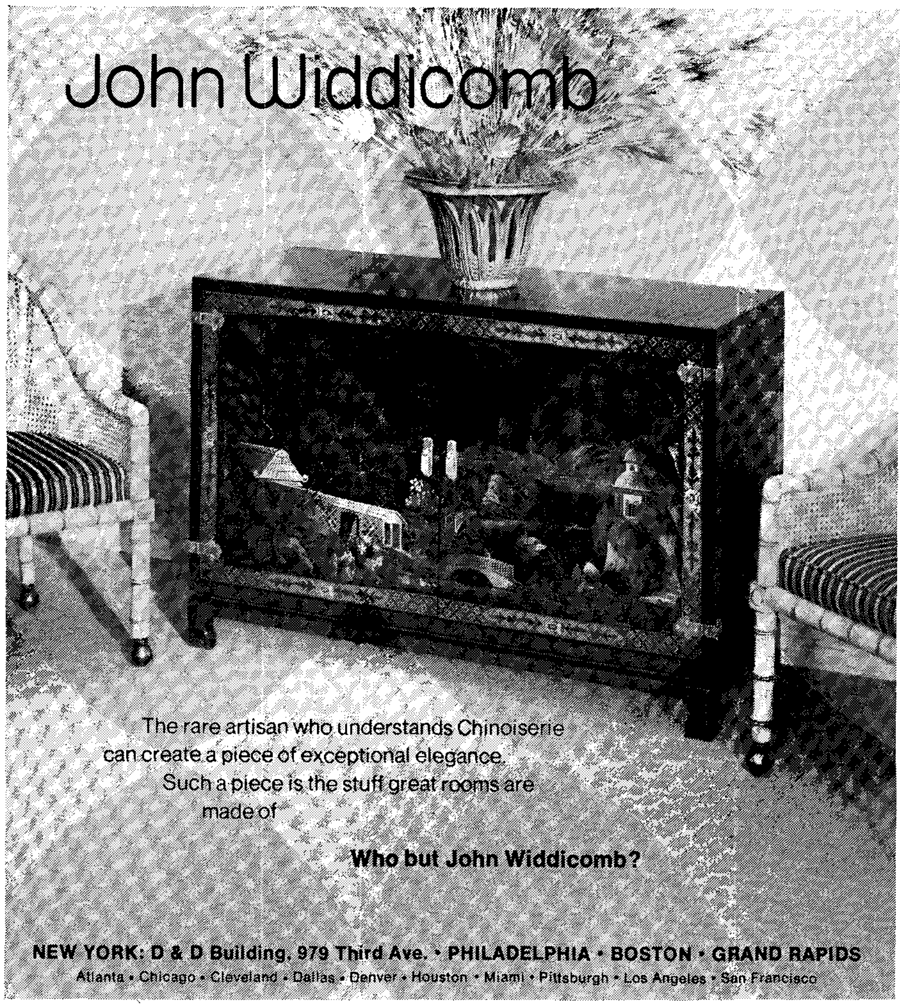

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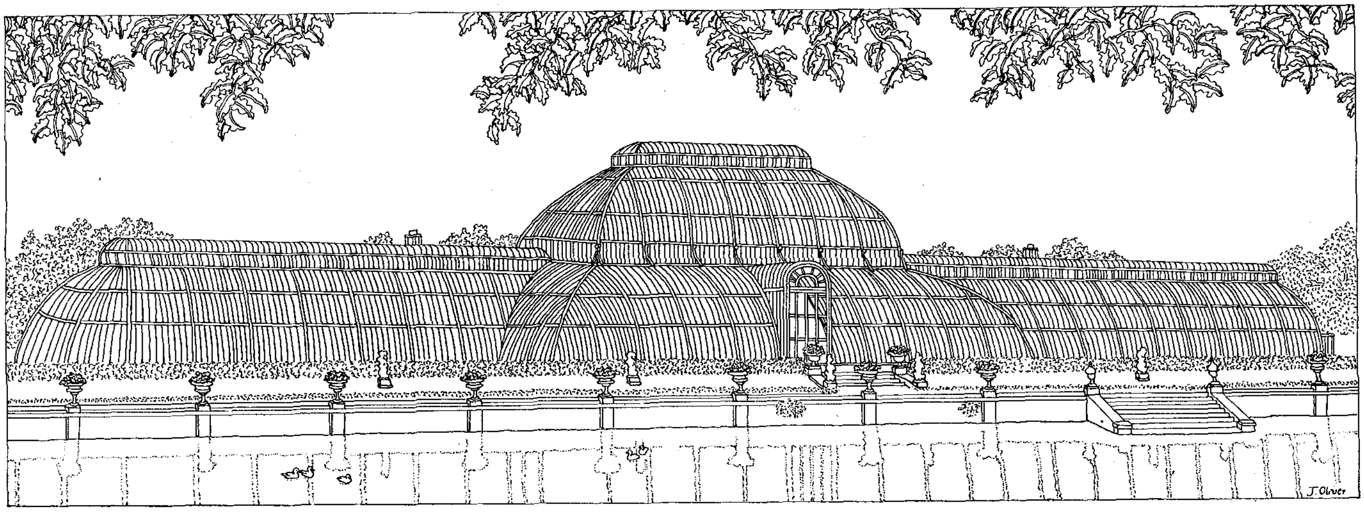
Evil. Maybe he could not think of any other reason to send Willard upriver. Most likely, he just fell in love with the romantic idea of Kurtz, Kurtz, Kurtz of the voice, the "bewildering," "illuminating," "exalted," "contemptible" voice, and with the idea of Brando as Kurtz. The movie begins to parade big ideas, to partake of Kurtz's grandiosity. Coppola is not content with having shown us Herr's "joke at the deepest part of the blackest kernel of fear;" he wants to show us Conrad's "meaning," which is not inside Marlow's tale "like a kernel but outside, enveloping the tale which brought it out only as a glow brings out a haze." Marlow calls Kurtz "that pitiful Jupiter." Cinematographer Vittorio Storaro's camera reveres Brando's shaved skull, defined by a crescent of light, the way "2001" reveres the solar system. And the movie collapses, as "2001" does, in a final attempt to show the unshowable. "2001" at least acknowledges the impossibility of showing it in a normal way. "Apocalypse Now" falters in conviction, making me feel the way I would have if "2001" had ended with some stock green men and Brando, in his Jor-El makeup, as the king of Jupiter.

Reviewing a movie version of "The Picture of Dorian Gray," James Agee wrote that he could not understand why Gray's depravity should "culminate in a couple of visits to a dive where an old man plays Chopin." It is no easier to understand why Kurtz's career should culminate in a poetry reading. In Conrad, Kurtz's reading poetry is an ironic detail, mentioned in an aside by one of his admirers (whom the movie turns into a stoned photojournalist, rather hammed by Dennis Hopper); the movie coarsens the reference by staging it as a big cultural number. Perhaps Milius and Coppola could not write dialogue that would show off the famous Kurtz-Brando voice half so well as T. S. Eliot, but this should have told them something about the pretentiousness of their approach to Kurtz. Coppola might at least have instructed Brando to read from Eliot as ineptly as he elsewhere pronounces "primordial" (it comes out "primord'l"), to suggest the maudlin falsity you hear when criminals quote poetry. If the movie has an anti-Marlow, why not an anti-Kurtz? When Willard, having slain the monster, sits down, covered with blood, at Kurtz's typewriter, I almost wanted him to start typing and the camera to close in on the page: "Kurtz was sleeping the big sleep now."

—VERONICA GENG

OUR FAR-FLUNG CORRESPONDENTS

NEW AND OLD AT KEW



IN 1772, the embryonic Royal Botanic Gardens, which these days are commonly known as the Kew Gardens, sent out their first plant collector, Francis Masson. He journeyed to South Africa with Captain James Cook, of the Royal Navy, history's most eminent navigator, who was embarking on his epochal second voyage around the world. After arduous fieldwork afoot and with cart and horse in what was then a remote and inhospitable part of the world, Masson sent off dozens of plants to be added to Kew's small collection. This journey and subsequent ones over the years increased the number of species at Kew by nearly five hundred. Many of the plants from South Africa were succulents, but there were also a number of others, one of which, a Kaffir bread tree—a tall, spindly tree whose stem was used as food by the South African natives—still stands, in Kew's Palm House. It is the garden's oldest floral inhabitant. After two centuries, during which Kew has acquired millions of plants, it is the largest, most deeply respected, and most influential institution of its kind anywhere. It holds this position partly, of course, because it includes three hundred acres of beautifully kept public grounds wherein are set out, in open beds or greenhouses, eighty thousand examples—different species, varieties, cultivars, and hybrids—of living plants. Some duplication is suspected; the exact number of the different flora has never been worked out. In size, the display ranges from trees more than a hundred feet tall to a pond weed with circular leaves one-tenth of an inch across and with microscopic blossoms. But Kew's eminence rests also on its scholarly enterprises, of which most visitors see no trace. Its herbarium, with five million plants dried and mounted on paper sheets or cards and filed in systematic order in cabinets, is the largest in the world. Its library and archives contain, all told, a quarter of a million volumes and reprints, more than a hundred and fifty thousand graphics in the form of flower paintings, engravings, and photographs, and more than a quarter of a million letters and manuscripts, from the eighteenth century on. In addition, Kew supports a staff of more than a hundred scientists and technicians constantly engaged in research projects—economic, scientific, and occasionally arcane. Long ago, an American botanist remarked to me with wistful admiration, "Something's always buzzing at Kew."

Consequently, when I was in London for a while recently, I telephoned Grenville Lucas—a principal scientific officer at Kew, whom I had known for some years—and asked what was new at the place. "Come on out and we'll show you," he said.

Kew lies nearly ten miles west of the center of London along the south bank of the narrowing River Thames, and I reached it by taking the Richmond branch of the District Underground line to the next-to-last stop. It was spring when I paid my visit, and the grounds were ablaze with blossoms. I took a leisurely stroll along footpaths and over turf. (Walking on the grass is permitted at Kew.) Then I sought out Lucas in his office, in the herbarium building, a rambling three-story red brick structure near the gardens' northern boundary. After a cordial greeting and a chat, he introduced me to Hugh Synge, a young London University-trained horticulturist, who was the first of several people he had arranged for me to meet. At the end of last December, after five years of intensive work, Synge, in collaboration with Lucas, had produced the first broad-scale Plant Red Data Book surveying all higher vegetation—a volume giving a selection of the world's endangered higher plants—for the Threatened Plants Committee of the Survival Service Commission. It was a publication issued for the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, or I.U.C.N., which has its headquarters in Morges, Switzerland. The book's title page states that the work was concluded with "the help and advice of experts throughout the world."

The Threatened Plants Committee is based at Kew, and is funded with grants from the World Wildlife Fund, whose branches in more than a score of countries, including the United States, conduct an annual appeal to raise money, part of which is funnelled to the Threatened Plants Committee. The T.P.C., as the Threatened Plants Committee is called at Kew, is an arm of the Survival Service Commission, which is chaired by Sir Peter Scott, the well-known aviculturist and conservationist, and which itself is one of six commissions of the I.U.C.N. The Survival Service Commission is concerned with the protection of endangered species of animals and plants. The five other commissions concentrate on ecology; education; environmental planning; environmental policy, law, and administration; and national parks.

The initiative for the formation of the I.U.C.N. came principally from the late Sir Julian Huxley. During his tenure as the first Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, he worried increasingly about the threat that the widening activities of man posed to the planet's biota. In 1948, aided by kindred spirits, Sir Julian convened a conference, in Fontainebleau, France, at which the I.U.C.N. was formed, with the purpose of fostering the maintenance of the biosphere and its diversity by rational management of the earth's resources. Money to do this comes today from three sources: the United Nations Environment Program, the World Wildlife Fund, and I.U.C.N. membership dues. The I.U.C.N.'s membership is unusual, in that it is composed of both governmental and nongovernmental bodies; in fact, it appears that any reputable organization that is interested in furthering the work of the I.U.C.N. can join. The present enrollment, numbering four hundred and forty-eight, consists of fifty-one national governments; a hundred and fifteen governmental agencies, including Kew; two hundred and forty-six national nongovernmental agencies; twenty-eight international nongovernmental agencies, including the Sierra Club; and eight affiliates.

"The new I.U.C.N. Plant Red Data Book is the sixth Red Data Book to be published," Synge told me. "The four others now in print were issued in the nineteen-sixties, and were concerned with the animal species—mammals, birds, amphibians and reptiles, and fishes—that were classified as endangered, vulnerable, or rare. These are three categories that the I.U.C.N. seeks to remove from risk. The same categories apply to plants. However, there is a great difference between the animal and the plant species in the province of the books. Among the former species, fewer than a thousand are believed to be on shaky ground. Roughly speaking, Red Data Book One, on mammals, noted some three hundred species; Book Two, on birds, a hundred and fifty; Book Three, on amphibia and reptilia, two hundred; and Book Four, on fishes, one hundred. Plants in similar peril, by contrast, number in the thousands. In 1968, Dr. Ronald Melville, who was then at Kew and is now retired, realizing the magnitude of the task facing botanists, and seeing also what had been done in the Red Data Books on animals, began work on the pregnable angiosperms—the angiosperms, or flowering plants, being the most recently evolved group in the plant kingdom. In 1970-71, his Red Data Book Five, on angiosperms, which is now out of print, was issued."

The sixth Red Data Book expands Melville's work. It adds to the flowering plants the conifers, the ferns, and the cycads, thus taking in all the so-called higher, or vascular, plants, the number of whose species thus far identified is estimated at a quarter of a million. Below these are the mosses, the liverworts, the lichens, and the algae. Along with the fungi and several individually small groups, they constitute the rest of the estimated eight hundred thousand species known to exist in the remainder of the plant kingdom—a figure that excludes, of course, such minute and borderline organisms as the bacteria and the viruses, about whose classification as plant, animal, or something else science is still a bit unsure.

The new Red Data Book, five hundred and forty pages long, lists two hundred and fifty species that on a global scale are believed to be at risk. This is merely one per cent of the estimated twenty-five thousand species thought to be in that condition. Information on each entry is provided at some length under the headings "Status," "Distribution," "Habitat and Ecology," "Conservation Measures Taken," "Conservation Measures Proposed," "Biology and Potential Value," and "Cultivation, Description, and References."

"We realize that this is but the first step in tackling the problem of preserving endangered plants," Synge told me. "But now that we've taken it we hope to issue another Plant Red Data Book every two or three years. Sales of this one have so far been encouraging. Priced at ten pounds a copy—twenty dollars—the initial printing, of fifteen hundred copies, is now virtually exhausted, and a new printing is planned. Purchasers are botanists, botanical libraries, research stations, teachers, science writers, and ordinary journalists. We are hoping that the last three groups, in particular, will widen popular appreciation of the importance of plants."

No true conservation of plants—or, indeed, of anything else—can succeed without the support of the general population, and the public has long been notoriously apathetic about the motionless, unvocal, accepted pieces of global furniture known as plants. But their importance is incontrovertible. They, and nothing else, take the raw energy of the sun and, by the process of photosynthesis, turn it into food for all other forms of life, including ours. This is perhaps their most important contribution. But, by the same process, plants also renew much of the world's supply of oxygen—a chemical element that keeps the motors of all organisms running, except those of anaerobic bacteria. In addition, again by the same process, plants contribute greatly to the removal of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Much of the carbon dioxide is currently produced by man's burning of fossil fuels, and if all of it remained in the air the temperature of the earth could rise from year to year, the polar ice caps could melt, the continental shorelines could be inundated, and the earth's equatorial regions might become uninhabitable. Finally, to end a list that could be longer, the tropical rain forests daily, through leaf-pore exhalation, pump tens of thousands of tons of moisture into the atmosphere—a vital factor in the maintenance of the present weather patterns. Indeed, over the past few decades the substantial reduction, for agricultural and ranching purposes, of such forests in the Amazon Valley has produced a local change affecting the inhabitants. The myriad trees that once covered the ground had absorbed and held within bounds the water that descends so heavily day after day from the sky. With their removal, flooding has become widespread. But extensive flooding in the nation of Brazil is nothing compared to what might occur the world over if all the rain forests were gone.

To compose the new Red Data Book, Synge and others read texts from the Kew library, and when-

IF YOU HAVE TO ASK YOU CAN'T AFFORD IT UNIVERSITY

ever their reading indicated that a plant species might be in one of the three risk categories the T.P.C. sent out standardized sheets appealing for information on it by mail from botanists and field-workers. The sheets bearing the requested information came back to Kew. Because the species name is in Latin, and English is a basic language in botany, there was no linguistic problem. Almost without exception, those who were asked about a species did their job well, even though it often meant neglecting or postponing their own professional efforts. The introduction of the Plant Red Data Book bears words of thanks to them. From the information they contributed, a master chart was made. The selection of the two hundred and fifty species that are presented was made with an eye to illustrating the various types of threats, of habitats, of distribution, of plant groups, and of possible protective measures, with an emphasis on species that are of particular interest or importance to mankind. By intention, the stress was not placed on the most severely imperilled species, although some of these were included.

"People are certain to be interested in plants of direct importance to them," Synge said, "This is natural. I'll give you examples of two of these—the first from the book, the second not. The plants of whose assets I'm going to speak were not known until recently. Peripherally, let me say that it is this quality of potential usefulness in hitherto unknown or untested plants which makes every botanist so uneasy about the loss of species. What, for instance, would have been the result if the cinchona tree of the northeastern Andes—the original source of quinine—had been destroyed, as so many trees are now being destroyed in the Amazon Basin? Many thousands of lives would have been lost in the last century to malaria in the world's warmer regions, and the societies of the world's tropical countries might have been greatly changed."

Synge went on, "The first instance I want to tell you about is the yeheb nut. It is the seed of a bush that grows on arid land in the Horn of Africa, and it has a pleasant, sweetish flavor and is very nutritious. The bushes are now threatened by the overgrazing of livestock—a result of the recent long African drought, which hit this area very hard. One of the countries affected is Somalia, which was a poor nation to begin with. These bushes will grow well in the wild without any care, so they are ideal food for nomadic peoples, such as the Somali herdsmen. If the bushes were protected and widely planted, they could do much to ease hunger in that part of the world. The second plant is one that grows wild in the deserts of your own Southwest and in adjacent Mexico. It is a shrub called jojoba. Recently, the odorless, colorless oil found in the seeds has been discovered to have qualities that were formerly thought unique to sperm-whale oil—withstanding high pressures and high temperatures. These qualities are extremely valuable for the lubrication of certain automatic transmissions. Mineral oils lack them. Furthermore, the jojoba oil, when hydrogenated, forms a hard wax practically identical with spermaceti and carnauba wax. Spermaceti, from sperm-whale oil, is used today as a base for ointments and cosmetics; carnauba, an expensive wax scraped from the leaves of Brazilian palms, is used in the manufacture of floor, auto, and shoe polishes, and of phonograph records and varnish. Jojoba can be cultivated on the rather poor land of your Southwestern Indian reservations. So it would supply a cash crop where it is badly needed, and also afford the sperm whale some much-needed breathing space. Here are just two examples of the almost infinite assets possessed by the kingdom of plants."

The T.P.C. hopes to expand its staff in the months to come. "Our eventual hope is to provide the required facts on imperilled botany to all who are in a position to use them," Synge said. "This should act as a stimulus to general plant conservation, with, as a positive minimum, the preservation of critically endangered plants as far as this is humanly possible. The lists will never actually be complete, alas, because in many parts of the tropics, especially, the rate of plant devastation is so great and so rapid, and the number of species is so large and our knowledge of them so in-

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complete, that our information on what is threatened could well not come until it is too late. Here the best we may be able to do is to list only the areas, rather than the separate species, that are endangered."

Synge paused, and then continued, "The T.P.C. is already encouraging the formation of lists by geographical regions, and will continue to do so. For example, a list of European threatened plants was published two years ago. This has been accepted by the individual governments of the Council of Europe, and the resultant resolutions calling for the protection of threatened plants have been endorsed by the governments' environmental ministers. At the same time, the one hundred and twelve species recognized as critically endangered are included in the Convention on the Conservation of Wildlife and Natural Habitats, which requires the participating nations to protect these species both by legislation and by conservation of their habitats. It is hoped that ultimately the areas in *every* geographical region where these critically endangered plants occur will have similar protection. The T.P.C. at Kew is heartened by the number of countries or geographical regions that are preparing, or have prepared, their lists. Your country, under the direction of Dr. Edward Ayensu, of the Smithsonian Institution, in Washington, has already completed its list—some twenty-five hundred species. The T.P.C., which is interested in endangered plants only on a worldwide scale, will prepare its future Red Data Books with the considerable help of the national and regional lists that we expect will be forthcoming."

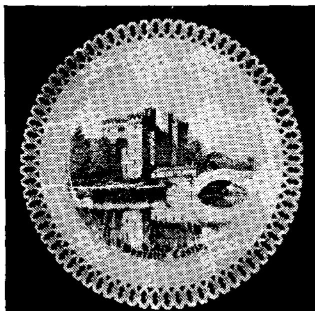
NEXT, I was introduced to A. G. Bailey, a mycologist, who handles the intermediate plant quarantine at Kew. "Normally, there are two kinds of plant quarantine," Bailey told me. "One is post-entry quarantine. Suppose the British government, or an individual in Britain, wishes to experiment with a potato variety available from the Department of Agriculture in the United States. The variety is requested, and the material is sent for quarantine to Edinburgh, where this sort of work is performed. There time is taken for tests for virus infection and for bacterial and other diseases. The material is held in quarantine for a minimum of one year. If found to be clean, it is propagated or hybridized, or whatever. Perhaps, to take one possibility, what is wanted is a tuber resistant to blight. Will this one resist blight? Tests show that it will. Good! It is then handed over to plant breeders for use in breeding programs. This is post-entry quarantine."

Bailey went on to explain the second kind of quarantine. "Intermediate quarantine, which we do here, is different," he said. "Only a handful of other countries practice it—most notably your own, France, Holland, and Portugal. Bananas, coffee, and sugarcane are among the usual plants involved. In illustrating our procedure, let us take cocoa—the base of all forms of chocolate. The cocoa tree, whose dried and pulverized seeds form the edible product, was originally native to the eastern slopes of the northern Andes, but it was widely known in the New World in pre-Columbian times and was a favorite drink of the Aztecs in Mexico. Because cocoa needs a warm climate, it can be cultivated only in the area between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn. Today, it grows not only in its former territory in South and Central America but also in the Caribbean, in a belt across Africa from Liberia to northeastern Madagascar, and in Ceylon, Malaysia, Indonesia, New Guinea, and the small islands to the east, including far-removed Fiji."

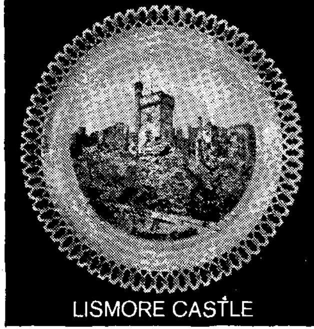
In Europe, cocoa is believed to have been first grown at Kew, before 1785, and, like other plants grown here, it was distributed, throughout the nineteenth century, to various parts of the widening British Empire, including West Africa, which is now an extremely important source of the product. Better genetic stock is a basic requirement for the improvement of crop productivity. Also, a great diversity of genetic material is found within the original varieties of cocoa. Shortly after the Second World War, agronomists discovered that cocoa types native to the upper Amazon in the area of the original source of the tree could do much to improve the stock in West Africa and elsewhere. Consequently, more than twenty years ago there began to be considerable movement of these types out of the Amazon area to other cocoa-growing regions. Quarantine procedures were instituted to check the possible spread of disease. Today, when South American varieties are wanted by some other area the typical procedure is for a governmental body in that area to request the desired stock from its counterpart in South America and to ask that the material be sent to Kew for intermediate quarantine.

"In Kew, which is outside the tropics, there are naturally none of the cocoa diseases that exist in those hot areas of the Old and New World, so cocoa material here is not threatened with new diseases. But it may be carrying some. We carefully screen for that. For example, New World stock may have a fungus disease called witches'-broom, which should not spread elsewhere. West African stock, on the other hand, is afflicted with cocoa virus. This is not present in South America and, of course, should not be allowed to get there. Cocoa virus was not present in the original cocoa plants shipped from Kew to West Africa. The suspicion is that the infection came from the kola tree—a relative of the cocoa tree, native to West Africa, whose nut is used to produce the flavor of cola drinks. The incoming material may ultimately be used for a variety of purposes by those who ordered it. The stock we process may be used to produce hybrid trees more resistant to disease, or better adapted to soil composition, or bearing seeds of better flavor and greater yield. Alternatively, the plant may be sent out just as it is, if it has features that the recipient country wishes to propagate without change. We get pencil-size twigs from selected healthy South American trees and, for a starter, treat them with fungicides. Then we graft the twigs onto West African seedlings and watch carefully for the appearance of any other disease during the period of quarantine—a minimum of a season. If at the end of that time the grafted plant shows no disease, the material is forwarded to the recipient country, where, we understand, further checks for health are made before planting. The annual worldwide cocoa crop tops three billion pounds, over five billion dollars' worth, and is a leading tropical cash crop. In the economy of the Third World, it is highly important, so those countries are trying to make their crop methods more efficient. Kew is happy to assist in this, and we also try to make our own methods more efficient each year. At the moment, we're concentrating on more sensitive tests for virus detection, and next year we plan to double the amount of material we can handle. The principle of quarantining is important. In southern Britain now, we have fifteen million dead elm trees, and a grave threat hangs over the more than eight million that remain. The introduction of the aggressive strain of the Dutch elm disease that has done all the damage might have been prevented by strict quarantine."

KEW'S Tree Root Survey, the next project I looked at, is expecting to publish later this year a booklet outlining information on the safe planting



BUNRATTY CASTLE



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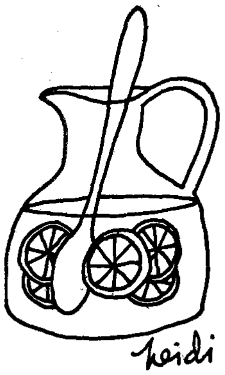
of trees near houses. The survey, which started in 1972, has been financed since 1977 by a number of large British insurance companies. It has been the custom at Kew to undertake outside commissions for work in its field which is judged to be generally helpful, as long as those receiving the data provide the financial support—as the World Wildlife Fund underwrites part of the research of the Threatened Plants Committee. In 1972, coverage of damage to a house resulting from tree-root activity was included for the first time in the comprehensive homeowner's-insurance policies of many companies in Britain. Claims were soon made.

In parts of southern England—particularly in the London area—building foundations rest on what is known as shrinkable clay. This is subject to desiccation not only from drought but also from the absorption of water by the roots of plants—especially trees. In the case of drought, there is usually no problem for the householder, for the soil shrinks evenly and as the house descends it remains level. With tree-root activity, the result is different. Though trees may cause trouble at any time, the threat they pose is greatest during droughts. In such periods, tree roots will become rampant in their search for moisture, penetrating deep beside foundation walls, or even under them. Drawing moisture from one side of a foundation, or from beneath it, the roots may cause the soil to collapse as much as three or four inches in that area. The house may then settle lopsidedly. Cracks may appear in its walls. A bay window or two may peel off. And the insurance company hears about it quickly. In 1977, following the drought of 1975-76—the worst in Britain in over two centuries—the companies paid claims of more than eighty million pounds for tree-root damage, or about four times the normal annual payment. Only naturally, perhaps, as tales of this damage spread, the public overreacted and began felling numerous household trees. In many cases, Kew feels, this cutting was misguided, since urban trees are ornaments, shade producers, and windbreaks. A prominent aim of the forthcoming publication is to counter such unneeded activity.

To learn more about the Tree Root Survey, I walked over to the Jodrell Laboratory, a T-shaped two-story white wooden structure behind the flower beds of the herbaceous grounds, then aburst with blooms, among them a stunning display of climbing roses on a pergola. In the building, where research on plant anatomy, cytology, genetics, and physiology is carried on, I met Ian Richardson, a taxonomist. He began by showing me a letter that had come in that morning with a root sample from an insurance adjuster. The communication was brief and to the point. It read, "We enclose a root sample and should appreciate it if you would identify the source for us. Yours faithfully . . ."

"What we do is to slice the root sample in all three directions—transversal, radially longitudinal, and tangentially longitudinal—and prepare slides to give us phases of the anatomy," Richardson said. "Then we stain these to bring out the structural details—the cells, the rays, the pitting of the cell walls, and so on—that are characteristic of the genus of the tree that bore the root sample. Then we compare the result with more than a thousand slides of authenticated root specimens from plants at Kew, each with the three planes of section. These are backed, if necessary, by more than five thousand slides that have been prepared from roots previously sent in for identification. From these references, we come up with our answer. This is in the form of a certificate of identification, which is sent to the inquirer at a charge of five pounds for each root identified. The certificate is often used in court, and has never been challenged. Along with the certificate, we send a survey card with twelve questions concerning the tree from which the root sample was taken, and we are happy if it is returned to us. More than twenty-five hundred cards have been. The card includes questions whose answers might be helpful to us in preparing our coming booklet. The questions deal with tree location, tree height, root diameter, root type—whether lateral, tap, both, or lateral with droppers—and soil type, and the like.

"To give you a very simple instance of how the certificate is used, let us say that damage has occurred to a house in whose yard a beech is growing. In the yard next door grows a willow. From excavations made, a sample of the offending root is recovered and sent here for identification. It proves to be not from a beech but from a willow. Thus, the insurer of the damaged house is not charged and the insurer of the house next door is. Willows and poplars are notorious evildoers. So was the elm before it largely died out. Oaks are also under suspicion. They may turn out to be pretty dangerous as well. Tree roots can go surprising distances in search of water—sometimes outward to double the height of the tree. A modest twenty-foot tree can have roots forty feet long. The Tree Root Survey booklet, which we expect will consist of sixty or seventy pages, and which is scheduled to come out in December, will endeavor to provide the public with the information we have been able to obtain from our returned survey cards. It will describe safe and unsafe trees, suggest distances from a house which in the past have resulted in no damage, and so on. In the case of trees that *might* be considered unsafe, the booklet may state that while such a tree planted at *x* feet from a house would be considered unsafe, one planted at double that distance would pose only a small risk and therefore would be usable."



Next year, Richardson will run the service as a private enterprise, from his home, in Reading. Kew considers that with the publication of the booklet it will have done its part in Great Britain's Tree Root Survey.

FROM the Jodrell Laboratory, I made my way to Aiton House, to call on some people in the Micropropagation Unit. The building, a rambling modern two-story structure in a non-public area of the northwestern part of the gardens, is named in commemoration of William Aiton, a Scot, who became Kew's first head gardener in 1760, his appointment marking the formal beginning of the Royal Botanic Gardens. Aiton served here until his death, in 1793. He is recorded in memoirs of the time as being a kindly man who had a remarkable ability with vegetation, coaxing out of the ground at Kew during his tenure scores of the fifty-six hundred plants he lists in his work, "Hortus Kewensis," which has been described as "the most important of all eighteenth-century publications associated with Kew." In his namesake building, which lies north of the Eucalyptus and Birch Stand, I met Harry Townsend, assistant curator in charge of the technical section, who told me that the purpose of the micropropagation section was to produce plants whose conservation is important, which are rare, and which are difficult to propagate by conventional methods. He passed me along to Dr. Nicholas Henson, a bearded young botanist, who said that much of his work at the moment was with ferns—an ancient type of plant which does not bear seeds. Ferns, of which some ten thousand species are known, and whose dead material in the Carboniferous period, aeons ago, helped form our great coal deposits, normally propagate in nature by a primitive method known as the alternation of generations. Both spores and sex cells are involved. When spore containers on the recognizable fern plants mature and burst, the ripe spores fall to the ground. In a shady, moist spot, each spore ordinarily develops into a tiny green heart-shaped plant, which produces both male and female cells. When these are fully developed, male cells swim through moisture deposited on the plant by rain or dew to female cells, which are called eggs, and fertilization takes place, the fertilized egg staying in place on the plant and sending a root down through it into the soil. The fertilized egg then grows into the conventional fern plant. With most ferns, the process from spore to spore takes at least two years.

To explain his work's significance, Henson quoted to me the words of Professor R. E. Holttum, of Kew, one of the world's leading authorities on ferns: "There is a real danger that many fern species may be exterminated before the evidence they could give [to plant taxonomy] is placed on record." Henson told me about his fern-propagating technique, which he calls simple, but which, he says, has never been employed before, as far as he knows. "I take the green, closed spore container, before it's ready to loose its spores," he said. "The fact that ferns can be grown from spores has been known since the eighteenth century. I wash the closed container in household bleach, to sterilize, and then twice in sterilized water to remove the bleach. Next, I plant the container in a test tube on agar jelly containing salts that include six elements essential for plant growth—nitrogen, potassium, calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, and sulphur—and traces of other chemicals in very

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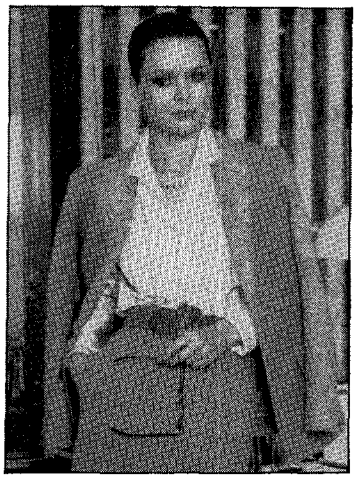

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small quantities, along with sugar, vitamins, and a harmless dye to indicate changes in acidity in the growth medium. The ferns on which this is done are rare—in some cases even in danger of extinction. They are also very difficult to propagate conventionally. Once the plants have sprouted, they go into our own nursery glasshouse here. When they are old enough, they are taken to the fern unit, where John Woodhams, the head of Kew's fern section, organizes their distribution to botanical gardens around the world. This method of propagation has been successful—surprisingly so, I should say. Fashions in plants, like everything else, change with the times. A hundred years ago, we had the Victorian fern craze. Today, ferns are again becoming very popular as houseplants. Actually, I believe that careful commercial growers can use this method to raise and distribute ferns. Furthermore, because ferns may hybridize freely, new and interesting and vigorous hybrids can become a feature of the increasingly popular houseplant scene."

MATERIAL and inquiries associated with antiquity often end up on the desk of Nigel Hepper, a Kew taxonomist whose interest in the past extends to the successful making of papyrus—the substance that essentially began Egypt's long historical record. In fact, before we got to what was lying on his desk, in the herbarium, he gave me a brief discourse on papyrus—a subject that obviously engages his affections. "Papyrus is a sedge that grows in ample, warmish water," Hepper told me. "There are large stands of it in East Africa, especially, in the Sudan, but it is now scarce in Egypt, because of population pressure. Actually, it makes an excellent paper today, just as it did millenia ago. In the beginning, it demonstrated advantages over other early writing surfaces, such as potsherds, stone slabs, and the clay tablets that were used for cuneiform script. It was perhaps less durable than those heavy, stonelike pieces, but it could be rolled into long, light bundles, and it was very tough. Many of the Dead Sea Scrolls were papyri. Egyptians wrote on papyri with a reed pen, using an indelible ink made of soot from cooking pots, water, and a little gum. The technique persisted for centuries. Parchment, first used in Asia Minor a century or two before Christ and popularized principally by the Romans, gradually replaced papyrus over the next thousand years. I made papyrus paper in the original fashion by taking foot-long lengths of the stalk, removing the green skin, thinly slicing the white pith, and laying the strips side by side. Then across them at right angles, according to the ancient method, I laid a second layer, tapping the two together gently with a mallet. One then had sheet papyrus paper, I discovered. Vegetable gums in the sap hold the pounded strips together. At present, there is some consideration, I hear, of once again attempting the material's commercial manufacture. An insatiable demand exists today for paper, and pulpwood is becoming expensive. As a small step toward utilizing papyrus, a papyrus institute has been started at Giza, in Egypt. It manufactures and ornaments papyrus paper as a business venture. Papyrus, of course, gives us our word for paper, from '*papuros*,' the Greek word. The Greeks called the pith of the stem *biblos*. In time, this was the word originally used for 'book' and, of course, the Bible."

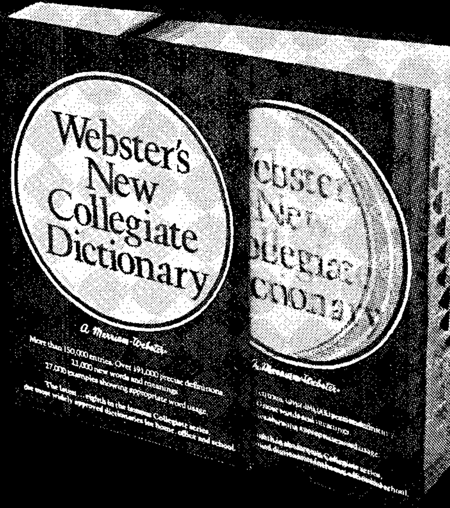
Turning to his desk, Hepper showed me a box containing carbonized lentils, centuries old, and other plant remains from excavations, still in process, by a team from London University that is digging at an animal necropolis in Egypt, where mummies of baboons, cats, and ibis have been found. "Earlier excavators were interested in recovering such things as gold, silver, ivory, and pottery objects," Hepper said. "Today, there is much more of a desire to find details of how life was lived then—in other words, the background of ancient times. From this material—largely lentils—taken from a jar recovered at the dig, I have been extracting and identifying weed seeds. Thus, in time the expedition can learn what weeds grew in the lentil fields of the pharaoh's kingdom thousands of years ago. Also from the necropolis is this thick brown rope, of the same period. It's twisted papyrus rind. Hawsers of it in the hands of men hauled stone blocks up ramps to make great monuments."

BESIDES the activities that were going on at the time of my visit, some of which were temporary and some not, Kew sponsors other projects, one being the dispatch of a number of expeditions each year to botanically interesting and often remote parts of the world. The many plants collected on these trips are studied for new species to go into the herbarium's files, and for research in other matters. Earlier in this decade, to give an example, a party entered the largely unexplored rain-forest area of Mt. Roraima, on a plateau where the borders of Brazil, Venezuela, and Guyana meet. It rains there every afternoon. Sheets of water cascade over cliffs and through the resultant rain forest, which is dwarf, rising only ten or twelve feet high, because the altitude is seven thousand feet. Among the hundreds of specimens obtained were some carnivorous plants. These plants get nitrogen, which is lacking in the wet soil where they normally grow, from the bodies of insects that they trap. Among the carnivores collected in the rain forest were samples of *Heliamphora nutans*, which was later successfully cultivated at Kew—a botanical first, and an achievement that permits previously impossible research on the plant. *H. nutans*, like virtually everything else at Kew, is available for study by scholars.

Before leaving, I asked my friend Lucas to cite a few other accommodations that Kew offers the botanical world, and he said, "Some that come to mind are acting as a storage depot for the world's flora, and therefore as a center for taxonomic, anatomical, cytological, biochemical, ecological—including conservational—and 'whole plant' research; the provision of an identification program, giving plant names to bona-fide researchers, if the identification falls within our own goals; also, being a repository of paintings, archives, and general plant data, and therefore a center for historical researchers in the botanical field, over and above normal library facilities. Next, there is the Index Londinensis, which gives the sources of botanical illustrations published up to 1970—a register that has now been terminated. We also hold, in botanical banks, seeds of endangered species for possible future propagation. We publish the Index Kewensis, listing the names of all plants, along with the place of their publication, since Linnaeus started his major system of nomenclature, in 1753. And, finally, there is the Kew Record of Taxonomic Literature. To expound on this last for a bit: During the past five years, it has offered a complete index of taxonomic botanical literature. Its entries are classified both by plant group and by country, and report the author, title, and publication of an article. This means that even if a botanist is working at a remote research station in the Australian outback, for example, but is reachable by post, he can keep up with developments in his field through the Record service, and when he finds an entry of interest he can write the author for a reprint.

"Of course, doubtless I am slighting badly aspects of the place that I've omitted in this offhand summary."

In truth, things keep buzzing at Kew. —EUGENE KINKEAD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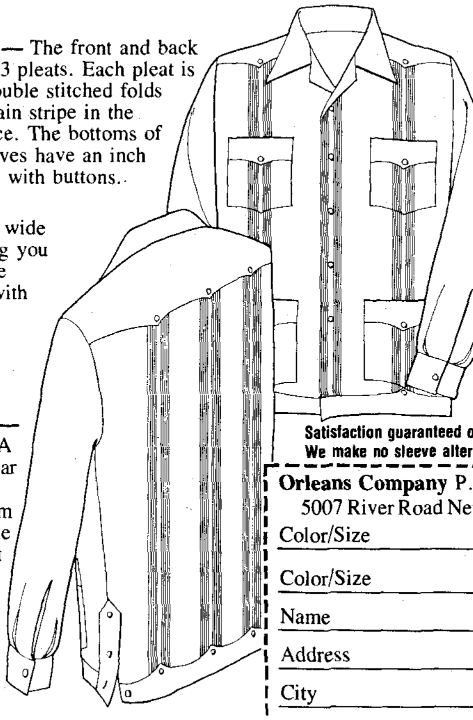
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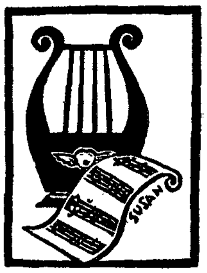
MUSICAL EVENTS

Escape

PETER SCHAT's second opera, "Houdini," appeared at the Theater Carré in Amsterdam in September of 1977 (a remarkable year for Dutch opera: before "Houdini," Hans Kox's "Dorian Gray" had been revived, and Jan van Vlijmen's and Reinbert de Leeuw's "Axel" had been brought out at the Holland Festival). The Amsterdam performance reached this country on record, on the Composers' Voice label of Donemus, the publicly funded publishing house and library of Dutch contemporary music. Then the American première of "Houdini" was given at the Aspen Music Festival, early last month. The result was somewhat confused, musically, scenically, and dramatically. With the help of the score (also published by Donemus), the libretto, which is by the English poet and playwright Adrian Mitchell, and the records, I have been trying to discover what sort of piece "Houdini" really is, what its creators' aims were, and whether a strong production could reveal them. The Dutch staging, directed by Donya Feuer, was described in the press as "ineffectual and sometimes decidedly chaotic," and much the same could be said of Aspen's, directed by Ian Strasfogel.

Schat, one of Aspen's two composers-in-residence this year, was born in 1935. His first opera, "Labyrinth" (1966), subtitled "An Opera of Sorts," uses singers, actors, tapes, and film. Three years later, he contributed to "Reconstruction," a collaborative "morality" about Che Guevara created for the Holland Festival by a group of progressive Dutch composers and writers. Schat's work of the seventies has been characterized by, on the one hand, a growing social conscience, manifested in settings of Mitchell and Pablo Neruda, and, on the other, a rebellion against the music of our day made by processes described in the jargon of engineering: permutation, interpolation, superposition, phase, etc. In a 1976 essay, Schat links the manipulation of people out of city hearts into neatly planned dormitory suburbs and the manipulation of pitches (and of durations, dynamics, timbres) into neatly planned series. He tells how he yelled into the microphone of a "music"-making computer, "Can you sing, can you make a melody?" It couldn't. And writes with scorn of "hundreds and thousands of calculation scores . . . scores full of dead voices—for what each musician was given to play could not by any stretch of the imagination be called pleasant." But their day, he suggests, is coming to an end:



> The 1970s are characterized by a mass apostasy from optimistic faith in the Triumph of Technique. The victory of the Vietnamese farmers over American super-technology, the energy crisis, the destruction of the environment or of the Nieuwmarkt [an old quarter of Amsterdam razed to make way for a subway] are all events that have shaken this glib faith.
>
> But what now? Must we do without technique, electronic or otherwise, in music? Drop out, back to nature, back to the Tonic, whether attired in the new clothes of the emperors of American minimal mood music or not? Or push on toward that other modish stultification of musical communication, toward the mystical music of Karlheinz Karma Stockhausen?

None of those, Schat replies. "What we must do is employ a homeopathic principle, combat the disease with its own cause, conquer technocracy by technique—a made-to-measure, human, anarchistic technique, a technique that answers instead of astounding." And a first step, he proposes, might be to look again at Schoenberg's "method of composing with twelve notes related only one to another" paying special attention to the "love relationships between the notes" and forgetting the numeration from one to twelve which turned notes into fodder for machinelike processing. And so Schat's latest scores are marked by a careful, loving concern for the effect—the audible and emotional effect—of intervals and of the harmonic tensions they create. The finest of these scores, I think, is his First Symphony, a substantial four-movement work in classical forms. It was commissioned by the city of Amsterdam for the ninetieth anniversary of its Concertgebouw Orchestra. Colin Davis conducted the first performance last year, and it is recorded on the Composers' Voice label.

Schat's musical ideas are most easily followed in straight concert music; in "Houdini" a good deal else must be followed at the same time. The opera is at once a music-theatre biography of the great "escapologist," an unreticent, unabashed paean to a son's love for his mother, a myth or ritual of imprisonment and escape directed toward a final uplifting exhortation, and, not least, a "circus opera" in which turn follows turn with the immediacy, zest, and swift pace of a popular entertainment. Schat was drawn to the subject, he says in a program note, by seeing the BBC television feature "Houdini: The Man Who Made the Impossible Possible":

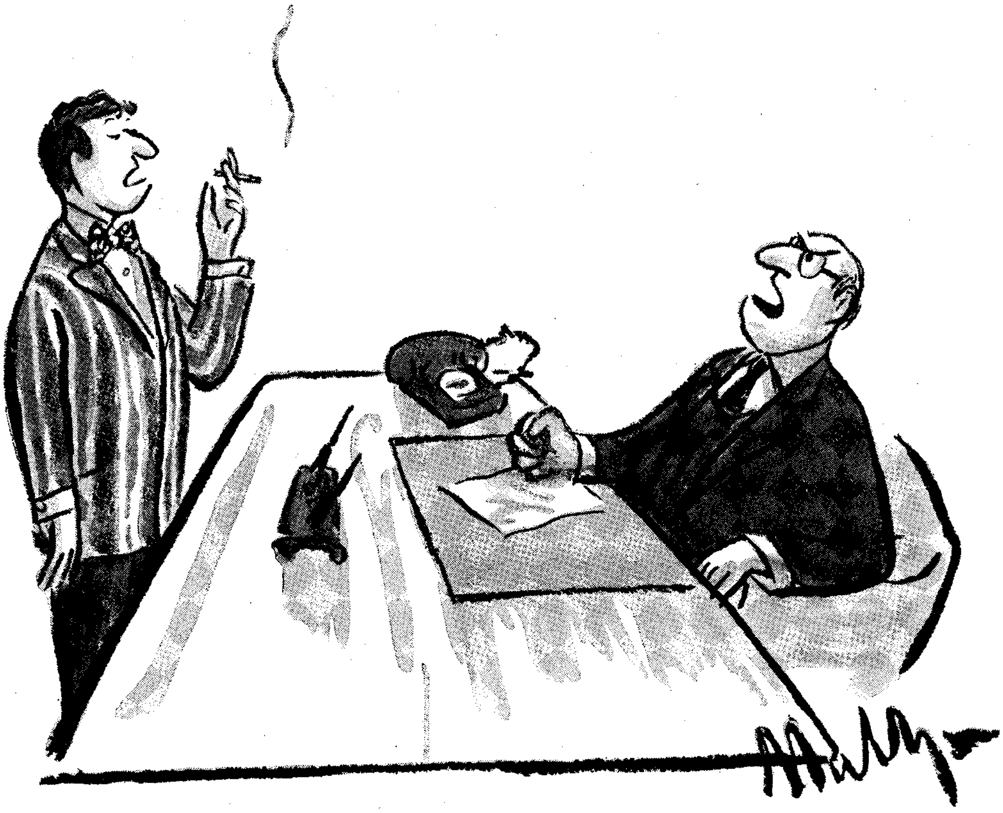
> Not only did this extraordinary man fascinate me by his art and unique skill, but I also found in his life the myth of Orpheus, his journey into Hades, Orpheus being the mythological Prince of Music, whose art carried him over the River of Death. Did not Houdini try the same, desperately searching for his mother?

Mitchell, invited to write the libretto, accepted enthusiastically. In his note on the piece, he says, "Everyone is on the side of the escapologist. He defies our fears of helplessness, darkness, drowning, strangulation, heights, prison, death, and the unknown. Everybody's heart lifts when Samson or King Kong bursts his chains." The dedication of the opera, "For my mother," he continues, is "a simple thank offering" made by both the composer and the librettist, adding, in his blunt way, that "Houdini doesn't want to go to bed with Cecilia—Freud is up a gum-tree with Jehovah." In several scenes, Houdini puts his head to his mother's breast, saying, "Let me hear your heart-beat." Marimba and pizzicato basses bump out a tritone—until the scene where Cecilia lies on her bier and there is silence. One scene is devoted to Houdini's letter to the safety department of the Bureau of Coal Mines, proposing that miners should be taught his methods of survival when air is limited. Some scenes are devoted to Houdini and spiritualism: his exposure of mediums' frauds, the séances held after his death because of his promise to his wife that he would return if he could. He did not return: the contriver of so many death-defying escapes could not escape death itself. But in the opera he then reappears to lead the full company in a "mass-escape finale," an affirmative hymn:

> Let the people of the world
> Shake off their chains . . .
> There is no heaven but the Earth.
> There is no heaven but the People.

In the production, screens that had been showing manacled hands were reversed, to depict a frieze of hands set free.

Schat began the composition in 1974, and so the Houdini episodes of E. L. Doctorow's "Ragtime," published the following year, could not have been an influence. But passages in that novel chime with the opera: "He was passionately in love with his ancient mother . . . In fact Sigmund Freud had just arrived in America to give a series of lectures . . . and so Houdini was destined to be, with Al Jolson, the last of the great shameless mother lovers." And "Every feat enacted Houdini's desire for his dead mother. He was buried and reborn, buried and reborn." And "Houdini never developed what we think of as a political consciousness. He could not reason from his own hurt feelings. To the end he would be almost totally unaware of the design of his career, the great map of revolution laid out by his life." Mitchell and Schat sought to trace at any rate the outline of that revolutionary map. But Houdini's career is an awkward epitome of universal emancipation, for several reasons. His aim was to be different from and to astound the multitude, not to suggest that everyone could escape from handcuffs, from imprisonment as easily as he did. Mere illusions of achieving the impossible won't get suffering mankind very far. And, as Houdini says in the opera to the mediums who claim supernatural agency in their feats, "My tricks are simply tricks which call/ For skill, strength, and imagination." When anyone learned to duplicate one of his specialties, he went on to devise a new one. So the political statement at the ending of the opera seems abrupt, imposed, a non sequitur. The only part of it that makes connected sense is the negation of an afterlife: "There is no heaven but the People." And that follows not from Houdini's obsession with spiritualism but from his widow's decision to abandon the annual séances.



"Forget I'm your son, Dad. Give it to me straight."

"You're fired."

• •

THE Theater Carré is a circus building. (Houdini himself appeared there in 1903—the bill is reproduced in the libretto—as part of a show that included a hundred and fifty equine and two hundred and fifty human performers.) It lends itself to large-scale music productions in which the traditional patterns of opera-house presentation are broken and thrown into question. The closest American equivalent to its audience is probably that which packed the Met for the Robert Wilson-Philip Glass "Einstein on the Beach," in 1976. In America, government, state, and city do not as a rule commission and then underwrite the performance of large-scale works sharply critical of government, state, city, and their social and artistic systems, whereas in West Germany, Italy, Britain, and Holland the practice is common. The Amsterdam audiences could approach "Houdini" as the latest in a line of socially committed works in which hallowed institutions are critically examined. But the Aspen audiences came to "Houdini" cold, unprepared by any such context, and not called upon to take sides in any national debate on what music or opera should be or do. So the work had to stand or fall on its intrinsic merits. That may not be a bad thing. Yet one should always bear in mind that connections, continuity—watching a composer, a concept, an ensemble, or a company grow from year to year—can invest an individual work of art, quite legitimately, with an interest not entered on international or eternal balance sheets. A piece with considerable local currency may still have small credit on its travels. The most important works and the most important performers become international. Radio, records, tapes, scores do something to propagate those less important. But a music critic—for that matter, any music lover of more than narrowly specialist appetite, anyone who feels himself to be living both passionately in the present and as an ephemeral speck on history's stream—tries to balance the local with the universal, the topical with the timeless, the great performers with the mildly meritorious. On the simplest level, it may come to a decision between going to hear Horowitz or Karajan at Carnegie Hall and supporting the local choir at its recital in the church hall down the road.

I'm glad Aspen decided to do "Houdini." But I think that I, and most of the audience, got less out of it, or found less in it, than European audiences did. We couldn't make all the connections. But it was good to hear what Schat, a leading musician of our day by any standards, has lately been up to, and to attend a kind of music-drama seldom encountered in America. So far as I know, there's been only one American opera—Leon Kirchner's "Lily," done by the New York City Opera—that deals seriously with America's intervention in Vietnam.

"HOUDINI" has five acts, entitled "Birth," "Love," "Fame," "Death," and "Heaven," and seventeen short scenes. There is about a hundred and fifteen minutes of music. The libretto and score specify two intermissions, after "Fame" and after "Death;" Aspen observed only the first, which comes about halfway. Schat wrote for large forces; the Concertgebouw Orchestra, the Netherlands Opera Chorus, the Amsterdam Electric Circus, the Electric Psaltery Quintet, the Studio Silver Strings, and the Circle

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Ensemble (a steel band) took part in the Amsterdam première. Photographs reproduced in the Donemus magazine *Key Notes* show that the instrumentalists ringed the stage—a large platform made of an inclined square leading into a flat one pouring out into the Carré arena. In the Aspen Music Tent, the same general disposition was followed, and the Dutch designs (set by Floris Guntenaar, costumes by Leonie Polak) were used again. But there is less room in the tent, and Mr. Strasfogel had devised a production so ambitious and complicated that by the young performers and stage crew it was not efficiently executed. One unhappy feature of the Amsterdam show was carried over: a change of floorcloths before almost every scene. The cloths were nice to look at, but any one of them left in position might have served the opera better than all the changing. In Amsterdam, the device was found fidgety; in Aspen, it created awkward silences between episodes planned to proceed without interruption, marked "*attacca*" in the score. The flow was broken, the opera lamed. In general, the production seemed to me to lack sharp focus. Beneath the confusion, there may have been some good ideas—Mr. Strasfogel's ideas are often better than his execution—but of all the opera's themes the only one to emerge clearly was Houdini's obsessive filial love.

This circus opera opens with Houdini's Straitjacket Escape, performed—during the overture—by an escapologist dangling upside down high above the stage. Various other Houdini stunts are enacted during the work, ranging from simple conjuring tricks to an escape from a locked box and, as a climax, the famous Water Can Escape. (This is specified in the libretto, and at Aspen Houdini's own water can was used for it; in Amsterdam, the more spectacular Water Torture Cell Escape, which Houdini invented when trick water cans became a mail-order item, was chosen.) The role of Houdini is shared by a tenor, who has the principal part; an escapologist; and an athlete or dancer, for the battle with the spiritualists. Schat and Mitchell evidently intended a circuslike flow of activity in which moments sentimental, entertaining, embarrassing, breathtaking, and stirring are close-woven. In this presentation, the magic did not enter the fibre of the drama; it was more a matter of "And now we stop for a trick." On the first night, some of the simplest tricks (the handkerchief that changes its color) went wrong, and the climax was tamely presented: so far as

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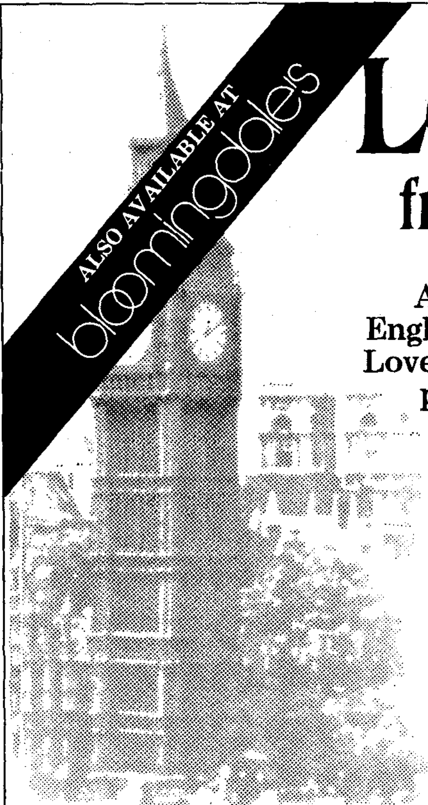
the audience was concerned, the escapologist, Mark Mazzarella, could simply have taken the lid off the water can and wriggled out of it the moment a curtain was raised around it. According to Elliott Carter, Aspen's other composer-in-residence this year, the real Houdini was so violently and insistently theatrical in manner that he was unpleasant to watch. Mr. Mazzarella was so mild and unassuming in manner that he cast no spell—except in the initial Straitjacket Escape, a feat of physical prowess enacted in public view. There he did have the audience gasping.

The general confusion—"What's it all supposed to be about?"—was compounded by the inaudibility of most of the words. The words of operas, in whatever language, are often inaudible, and therefore ever since the form was invented it has been customary to make a printed libretto available to the audience. The "Houdini" libretto, published by Clowns, an Amsterdam house, was on sale in Aspen. Words are easier to catch when they have been read shortly before a performance. Easier, but not always easy. I still caught little of what was being sung or said. The Aspen acoustics, the singers' enunciation, and the composer's word-setting and accompaniments must probably share the blame—in what proportions it would be hard to say. One singer, John-Paul Bogart, as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the chief spiritualist, made every word clear. Rose Taylor, as Lady Doyle, made nearly every word clear. The others were variable. Richard Dufallo, who conducted, had presumably taken the ordinary opera-conductor precaution of telling his players to listen to the singers and play more softly if they couldn't hear them. But the singers were often drowned. And even in lightly accompanied passages things were often unintelligible. Schat tends to take his vocal lines above the staff, where words inevitably disappear. His scanning of the English libretto is generally accurate, but some things revealed a less than idiomatic inflection of the language.

The Aspen singers—Jerold Norman as Houdini (he had also done the part in Holland); Rita Shane as his mother; Viviane Thomas as his wife, Bess; John Brandstetter as his manager—were all efficient. Sometimes they were more than that, rising to eloquence; sometimes they seemed limited to finding the right notes at the right time. Questions of balance apart—between stage and instruments, and between groups of instruments—the musical execution was accomplished. Mr. Dufallo



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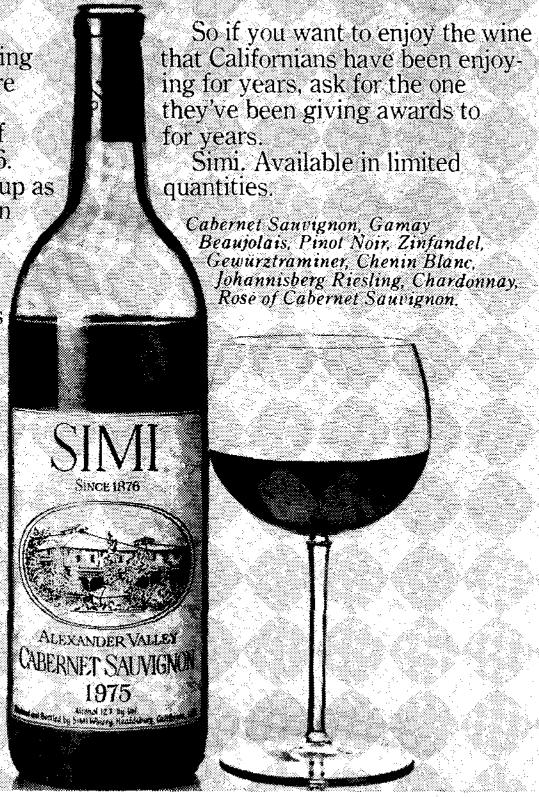


handled his huge and far-flung forces with assurance. More rehearsal and more pointed and economical stage direction could have produced a sharper, more precise account of "Houdini." Nevertheless, this one was a remarkable achievement.

SCHAT's "homeopathic" remedy for the ills of overschematized contemporary music includes more than a pinch of schematic planning. Each scene, it appears, has its characterizing theme, in which a particular interval is prominent. There are recurrent motifs—most persistently an animated, jerky figure that seems to represent Houdini's leaping toward the light. Again and again it comes, in various related forms, often on the trumpet. (The largest solo role in the opera, in fact, is the first trumpet's; the vigor and stamina of the Aspen player, John Aley, were extraordinary.) If that computer were to ask Schat, "Can *you* sing, can *you* make a melody?" he could answer yes and point to Cecilia's lyrical aria "I see your future shining," to the love scene of Houdini and Bess, to the expressive Act IV introduction (English horn and cello stealing through a drift of string harmonies). But sometimes one got the feeling that after establishing the basic "music" for a scene Schat had simply sustained it in a way both mechanical and monotonous. There are lively rhythmic episodes: a trio for Houdini, Cecilia, and Bess on the theme "Money makes the heart beat stronger;" chipper choruses for the circus folk and for the police. A good deal of the score is in five-beat measures, and while a rapid 5/4 can sound lilting (as in Tchaikovsky's "Pathétique"), five slow beats begin to limp when the ear loses any sense of the basic pulse. The finale seems to me a failure—clogged and turgid rather than stirring—but the very last idea, an unaccompanied solo for Cecilia, with musical and verbal echoes of the birth scene, soaring out on the words "Towards whatever shines," is beautiful and moving. Schat has an easy command of straightforward theatrical effects: the exhilarating beat of the steel band; in the final scenes, telling "suspense" music. He could claim, quite fairly, that his score is not meant to be listened to just "as music," that it is but one element, if the most important, in an elaborate show. The most nearly self-sufficient musical episodes he has already lifted out to form a "Houdini Symphony;" "May '75, A Song of Liberation;" and a "ballet to sing," "I Am Houdini," made of Houdini's challenge to the police forces of the world.

—ANDREW PORTER

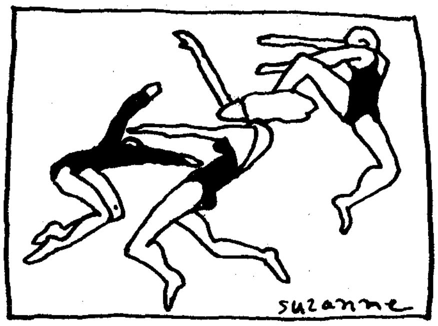
DANCING

The Bolshoi's Pathetic Fallacy

IN the Bolshoi's new "Romeo and Juliet," there are no pillows in the pillow dance, no swords in the duel scenes, no *duels* in the duel scenes, and Juliet does not rush madly along the apron and back with the potion. There is no bed or balcony. The designer, Simon Virsaladze, shrouds the stage in blood-dimmed gauze, through which we catch vague glimpses of tiled roofs or coffered ceilings or the well-known coastline of Verona. There is no funeral, and no tomb scene in which Romeo lifts high the limp body of Juliet. Instead, it is Romeo who flops lifelessly in a terminal pas de deux (the scenario has been rearranged to allow Juliet to awaken before he dies), and both lovers in death are lifted high above the heads of the mourners as the curtain falls. Bodies lifted high, supine or upright, above the crowd constitute a favorite tableau of Yuri Grigorovich, the choreographer of this "Romeo and Juliet;" he manages to work it into most of his ballets, and he literally excels himself when he has Tybalt lifted up in triumph by a mob of brawling Capulets and then the Duke of Verona rise right behind him even higher.

These scenes and others, more dimly insistent, suggest an attempt to dislodge the touchstones of the old Bolshoi "Romeo" and replace them with new ones. But the production as a whole has a more overweening aim, which is to tell the entire three-act story in dance terms—with dancing going on not just whenever it is appropriate but consistently and inevitably, whether it is appropriate or not. It is as if a schoolboy had undertaken to rewrite the play "Romeo and Juliet" in sonnets from beginning to end. The compulsive stylization leads to inflexibility and sameness in all those technical areas—plasticity, rhythm, proportion—that must be exploited to the full in order to sustain a full-evening composition. Out of continually changing tensions in these areas a choreographer builds interest in a drama. It isn't enough to have "story sense"—you have to have the sense, too, of the way stories move in space and time. John Cranko had story sense; so do a lot of scriptwriters who could have done as good a job as he of licking "Eugene Onegin" for the ballet stage. Grigorovich lacks even this elementary what-happens-next acuity. What happens next in one of his ballets is generally what happened a minute ago. In "Romeo and Juliet," scene with Nurse leads to scene with Nurse. The storytelling burden falls on Prokofiev, but as the evening wears on, the music is more and more disinclined to support the action in its blind, monolithic course. By the third act, Grigorovich and Prokofiev are so far apart that only mystique connects them—the mystique of "Romeo and Juliet" as a great popular hit and as the only classic that Soviet ballet has contributed to the international repertory.

Perhaps this is the reason—the familiar, beloved music—that Grigorovich hasn't tightened the score in the interest of creating a comprehensive dance drama. If mime is prosaic, dance is compressed and metaphorical; it naturally takes a lot less time to make its points. Grigorovich, though, goes in the opposite direction, reorganizing and stretching the score to include sections that have customarily been deleted. In the third act, this brings on a case of what Russian critics once diagnosed in Petipa as "divertissementitis." There is some evidence that Prokofiev's first thoughts about his "Romeo and Juliet" were of a Petipa/Tchaikovsky-style ballet. That is how Frederick Ashton perceived it when he staged his 1955 production for the Royal Danish Ballet. The marketplace scenes were formal corps dances; the ballroom scene was a suite of ensembles. But Ashton's conception was unified. Grigorovich's is merely omnivorous: everybody dance! He even tries to convert the lovers' intimate scenes into visions of the Romantic ballet by filling the background with a drifting group of damsels in pink tulle. To complement this suggestion, Romeo and Juliet, relentlessly lyrical, appear to have memorized long passages of "Giselle." Paris, by contrast, is a classical dancer who, with Juliet's entourage, dances the Classical Symphony in Act I. (Get it? Romantic equals soft, classical equals hard.) Such normally lay figures as the Duke of Verona, the Nurse, and Tybalt are given dance assignments; even Friar Laurence is pressed into partnering service and lays unpriestly hands on Juliet's person. Lady Capulet, she of the sundered bodice and wailing backbends, needs no augmentation, but she gets it anyway—a train of ladies-in-waiting acts as a wailing chorus when Tybalt dies. Tybalt's choreography appears to be based mainly on the bullfighter pirouettes and postures in "Don Quixote;" in fact, all the Capulets, including the Nurse, are Spanish. The marketplace merrymaking may be derived from the Italian-opera-style festivities in the earlier version of the ballet; it also looks like the folk dancing in "Don Quixote" or the carmagnole in "The Flames of Paris."



The merrymakers bang noiseless tambourines, which are in wide use at the Bolshoi—perfect props for all the pseudo-serious choreography, tokens of its pretensions to style when it's incapable of elementary differentiation. Grigorovich's stylistic borrowings in "Romeo" aren't reshaped to the purposes of "Romeo;" they're ready-mades plunked down in new contexts and expected to deliver new effects. Actually, the only new effect that Grigorovich achieves is the villainy of Tybalt, an extension of the clenched arrogance of the ballet matador. Most of the time, he isn't even trying for effects of characterization; he's trying to choreograph by decree, with results that look for all the world as if what used to be vilified as "formalism" had now taken hold as official artistic policy in the U.S.S.R. If that word can be applied to anything, surely it's to the meaningless surface conformity we see here. I was astonished to notice that the Veronese guard marches in the goosestep of the Roman legions in "Spartacus": Grigorovich had even borrowed from himself—not because he wanted to portray the Veronese as Fascistic, like the Romans, but because if they marched in ordinary fashion someone might accuse him of naturalistic movement. Goose-stepping is dance marching. The Russians who write the articles in the official souvenir program for the Bolshoi are careful to refer to Grigorovich's vocabulary as "classical dance as an expression of human emotion," as if all that were one word. And from watching Grigorovich's ballets you do get the impression that he thinks emotions are contained in the steps. Romeo's reaction on sighting Juliet on her bier is a string of double sauts de basque—a step he'd already performed so often that it doesn't even qualify as a unique reaction. And you sit there wondering who could believe this. Does everybody in Russian dance circles have this automatic trust in dancers as characters, steps as

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feelings? Are they going around in long hair and miniskirts spouting some Soviet version of "The medium is the message"? A saut de basque, nakedly propounded, is not a cry of pain. The ballet "Études" should have proved once and for all that classical *forms* have a structural coherence but are no more intrinsically dramatic than the harmonic series in music. The choreographer, Harald Lander, justly equates classroom combinations with Czerny keyboard exercises; the result is a smashing nonballet.

When Grigorovich has got everything the way he wants it—an overlong, unsortably profuse three-act score blanketed in dance steps that no one can deny are dance steps (haven't we seen them in our favorite ballets?)—to whom does he present it? He has responded to the challenge of a new "Romeo" not as an artist but as a politician. Whatever looks like dance is in, whatever looks like mime is out. Meaning, expression, interpretation of life—the things the politicians used to want explained as clearly as in an editorial cartoon—have been reconstrued by this new dialectic, I wish I knew how. The success of Grigorovich's mindless abstractions could only come about in a social atmosphere that is itself abstract. Although Grigorovich's rule is now under protest by some of the Bolshoi's outstanding established dancers, his choreographic method isn't one man's aberration. The tendency of Russian ballet in the twenty years since its reintroduction to the West has been toward a simulation of pure expression—not dance as metaphor but dance as not-mime, a definition arrived at by negation and without further qualification. This, of course, creates a literalism that can be subjected to simple empirical tests and an emptiness that can be filled by intellectual apologetics.

The only Western choreographer who seems to have a place in the derivative patchwork that makes up Grigorovich's "Romeo" is John Cranko. One can see the ancestry of Grigorovich's Mercutio not only in Cranko's Mercutio but in the Joker of his "Jeu de Cartes." It may be that Grigorovich intended these affinities to pay tribute to the man whom he is known to respect as the choreographer who had done the most to revitalize dance drama. Cranko's method—which caught on, interestingly enough, at just about the time of the vogue for Marshall McLuhan and "nonverbal communication"—consisted largely of dancing his way through the action of a libretto, although in his "Romeo" (which was modelled on the same verismo Bolshoi production Grigorovich now seeks to replace) he didn't totally dispense with mime. He came closer to doing that in "Eugene Onegin," which many consider to be his best work. Grigorovich, of course, eliminates every vestige of naturalism. In Grigorovich's "Romeo," the duels between the Montagues and the Capulets are like those noiseless tambourines: they've become rhythmic swipes through the air, with no contact and none of the sound of clashing steel that is traditionally a part of these dances. (It's like hearing the "Anvil Chorus" without the anvil.) The long knives the men carry instead of swords are slung behind their backs, out of harm's way when they do air turns and leaps. And when Mercutio suffers his death throes and makes light of them, he can't strum his sword, as he used to in the old production, so he's given Grigorovich's idea of a dance equivalent—a shoulder stand with his legs sticking up in the air. In fact, he dies in this position. There have been plenty of variations on this famous death scene; only in Grigorovich's is Mercutio's ridicule lost sight of and Mercutio himself made ridiculous.

I don't believe Grigorovich means to make Mercutio ridiculous; the ridiculousness is a logical consequence of making Mercutio a capital-D dancer. The role is really a trap for the choreographer. Mercutio, of all Shakespeare's characters, is most plausibly realized as a dancer. Yet in this all-dance ballet he is not more vivid than he is in productions that mix dance and mime. And it's not so much that Grigorovich lacks the talent to make Mercutio brilliant as that he lacks control. Mercutio appears to be acting without motive and from sheer high spirits; the audience sees this and decides that, of all the characters whom Grigorovich has deprived of motive in this storyless story ballet, only Mercutio has a right to that much freedom. We turn to him with grateful applause: "Why, he's just a dumb dancer!" But the character must die. Here's where Grigorovich should have called out motive, for Mercutio is pathetic in death only insofar as his gaiety in life was a reaction to danger; the clan wars have got him in spite of his bravado. But Grigorovich is able to refer us only to Mercutio's superficial existence. Even though "He dies as he has lived" is the way he means us to understand this death, if Mercutio hasn't lived except as a performing seal among other seals, there's no strength of meaning in his death—it's just the exit of a clown. The coarse choreography only makes matters worse. When Nijinsky died

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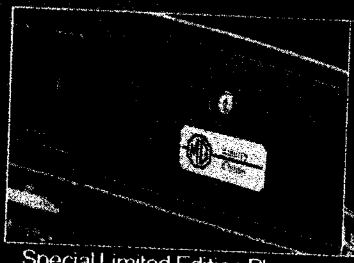

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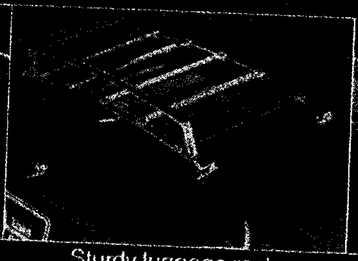

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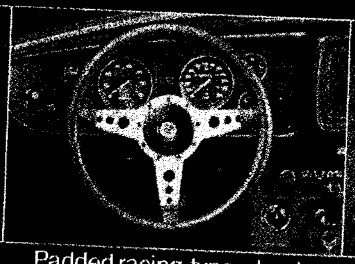

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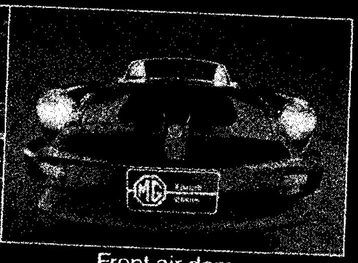

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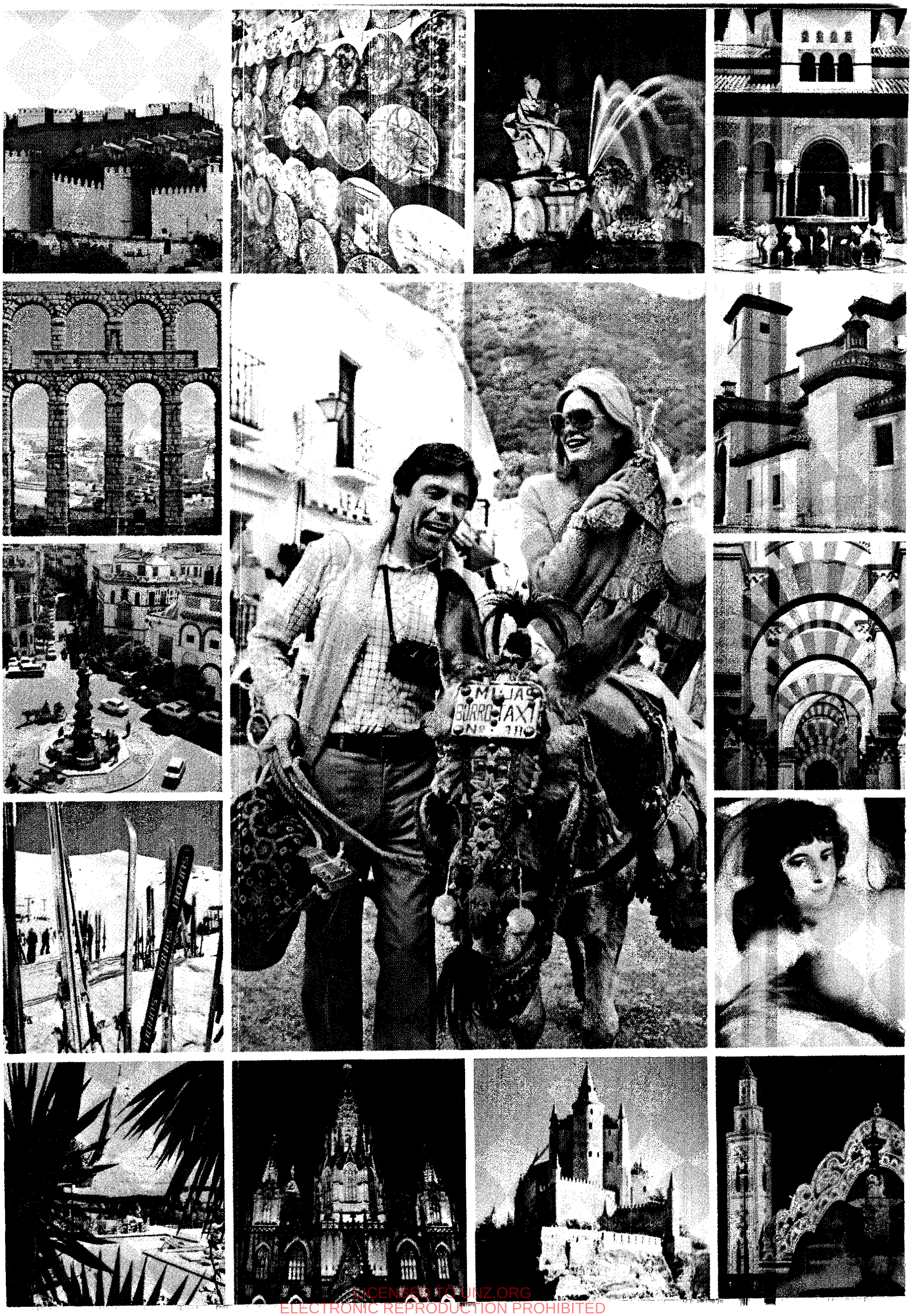
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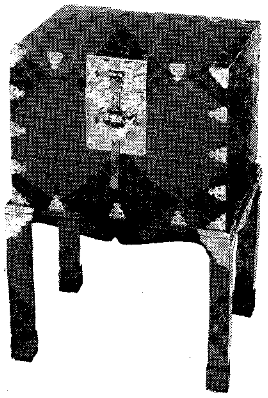

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upside down in "Sheherazade" ("But a blade flashed and he fell headlong, to *spin on the back of his neck with his* legs thrust rigid in the air," as Cyril Beaumont has written), the violence and ecstasy of the image expressed the rampant sexuality of the Golden Slave, truly dying as he had lived. Mercutio's pose doesn't have the resonance of metaphor. Grigorovich's practice as a choreographer has all along and with increasing aggressiveness been that of a man gripped by the pathetic fallacy of the emotive power of dance steps and poses. His quotations in "Romeo" are talismanic. Yet it doesn't matter whether he draws on Nijinsky or Cranko or creates some utterly unbeheld "dance" variation on the death of Mercutio. A character who hasn't lived cannot die.

I think one can see where Grigorovich's confusion connects with Western precedent. One can see, too, without knowing what pressures lie behind it, *that* excess flows from this confusion as surely as he who says A must say B. Cranko's ballets are, for me, hysterical and trivializing, but Grigorovich's are nihilistic. The "Onegin," which I saw again this summer during the Stuttgart Ballet's season at the Met, could not be redeemed even by our greatest dancer-actress. Natalia Makarova, who by reason of her beauty, temperament, skill, emotional refinement, and style could have created an ideal Tatiana, was nullified by a role where her qualities mattered less than a flashy kind of acrobatic talent and a feverish pulse. These, taken together, constitute the Cranko hieroglyph for "dance." Makarova reproduced it well enough, and the audience reacted as if jabbed by hot pokers. The point about Cranko's choreography is that it makes audiences believe they're seeing modern, in-tune-with-the-times ballet without giving them a single dance moment. Grigorovich gets the message; *only* his ballets are not for audiences, they're for commissars.

The role of Juliet was created on Natalia Bessmertnova and performed by her at the New York première. Apart from some ugly modern attitude-lifts, Juliet is an exhaustive recapitulation of Giselle, which happens to be Bessmertnova's greatest role and the role that ballerinas typically choose to grow contentedly old in. If the ballet stays in repertory, Bessmertnova's Juliet will be an additional lease on the life of her Giselle—a handsome present indeed from her husband, Grigorovich. As for Nadezhda Pavlova, who danced on the second night, neither the tame choreography nor the big, stiff, all-conceal-

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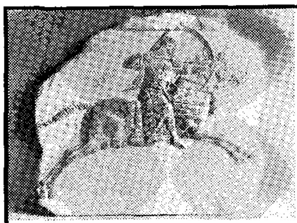

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ing Romantic tutu is appropriate. Pavlova, with *her* husband, Vyacheslav Gordeyev, as Romeo, performed more urgently and appealingly than Bessmertnova with Alexander Bogatyrev, but, like Makarova in "Onegin," they didn't make as much of a difference as one had hoped. Mikhail Tsivin, looking like a powerful Deni Lamont, was all this Mercutio could be, and Alexander Godunov had a personal triumph as an almost mystically brutal Tybalt.

Little more than a week later, Godunov defected. The detention of his wife, Ludmila Vlasova, at Kennedy Airport shifted the terms of the drama from artistic to political and legal ones. But the question all season had been whether and how Grigorovich has responded to the new talent in the company represented by Godunov and Pavlova and Gordeyev and Ludmila Semenyaka. Godunov's act—the first of its kind by a Bolshoi dancer—spoke for him. Ironically, Godunov had shown the most impressive development under Grigorovich's direction. He is, at twenty-nine, a fine example of a modern-day Bolshoi premier. Gordeyev, although he is also Bolshoi-trained, looks more like a Western classical dancer. Perhaps as a concession to their large New York audience, he and Pavlova were given starring roles in three of the five ballets the company did here. They had exposure, and they danced like dynamos, but they looked out of key with their roles and with the rest of the company. Gordeyev was shown in the three phases of Bolshoi masculine style—Heroic (Spartacus), Romantic (Romeo), and Exotic (Ferkhad in "The Legend of Love"). One of the world's most sophisticated dancers, he was buffeted by idiomatic corruption in the first (Godunov was a better, more Herculean, Spartacus), callously drained in the second, and just plain miscast in the third, where he was called upon for "Corsaire"-style gesticulations and hurtling squat-spins en l'air. As a performer, Gordeyev overrode all these abuses, but we never saw him at full technical capacity or in the mood of quiet elegance with which he sustains technical feats. In "The Legend of Love," a revival being seen here for the first time, he did display again and again that well-remembered catapulting grand jeté of his, and frequently Pavlova was there leaping at his side, as loftily, as hungrily, as tirelessly as he. This was her best appearance of the season. The ballet is conventional Soviet kitsch with a Turkish setting that one is invited to take not too seriously (Gri-

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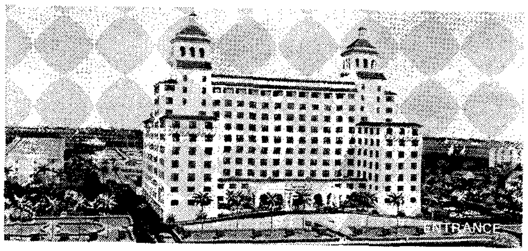

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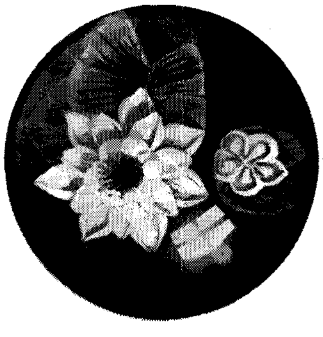

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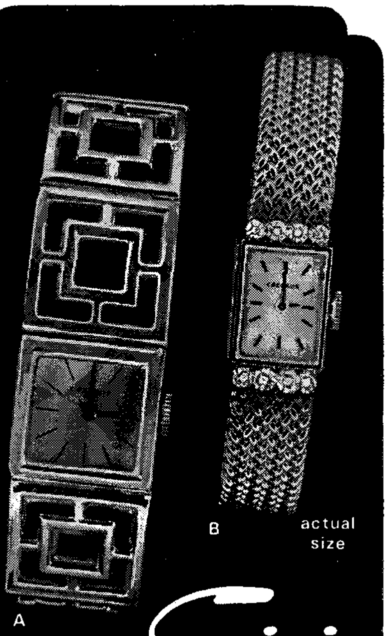
gorovich had a lighter touch in his earlier days); even so, the story is treated with unreasoning contempt. The score, by Arif Melikov, is serviceable dance music in elevated folk style with a Max Steinerish love theme. A recurrent misterioso passage, scored for strings, was for some reason heard on tape. There are plenty of costume changes—trousers, tunics, veils, the lot—for the two principal ballerinas, who play sisters (Pavlova and Nina Timofeyeva); Gordeyev, as the man they rivalize over, wears turbans. The enormous corps, too enormous for the State Theatre stage, does Radio City Music Hall routines, one of them remarkably like "Ravel's 'Bolero.'" Nothing happens until the second act, when, after weeks of fitting herself into one Bolshoi norm or another, Pavlova suddenly bursts out in an adagio with Gordeyev that is a sweeping reassertion of her gifts. There is something both casual and electric in her attack that is uniquely Bolshoi, but in the way she spirals and plummets and cuts the air she's unlike any other Russian dancer. She has matured physically into an astounding beauty; the prodigious legs are now part of her, and her incomparable flair is without disproportion or exaggeration. Yet though she still has it in her to revolutionize Bolshoi ballerina style, Grigorovich's idea of her seems to be that she's Bessmertnova all over again. Although Pavlova is turned out, she doesn't always use her turnout. You can see the power driving down the inside of her leg, clotting the thigh, loading the foot. The lovely infinite expansiveness of the grand style is denied her. Much the same thing seems to be happening to Ludmila Semenyaka, although with her the symptoms take the form not of impacted power but of laxity. Her "Swan Lake" had the fantasy one remembered from her performances of four years ago but not the perfection of form and scrupulous detail.

I can imagine how the gruelling ballets of Grigorovich might satisfy the work ethic of young dancers who are prevented by crowded schedules from performing often enough in their megalopolitan home theatre. Still, Godunov took off. One could wish for those who remain more than the glory of work. It may be significant that in two of Grigorovich's ballets, "The Stone Flower" and "The Legend of Love," the hero is an artist who rejects his private destiny and chooses a life of work among the people; it's "Le Baiser de la Fée" in reverse. The Bolshoi turns more than the dying Mercutio upside down. —ARLENE CROCE



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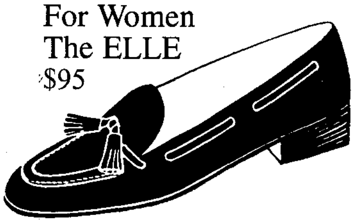

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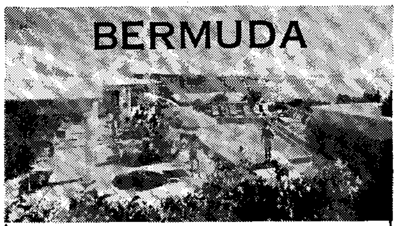

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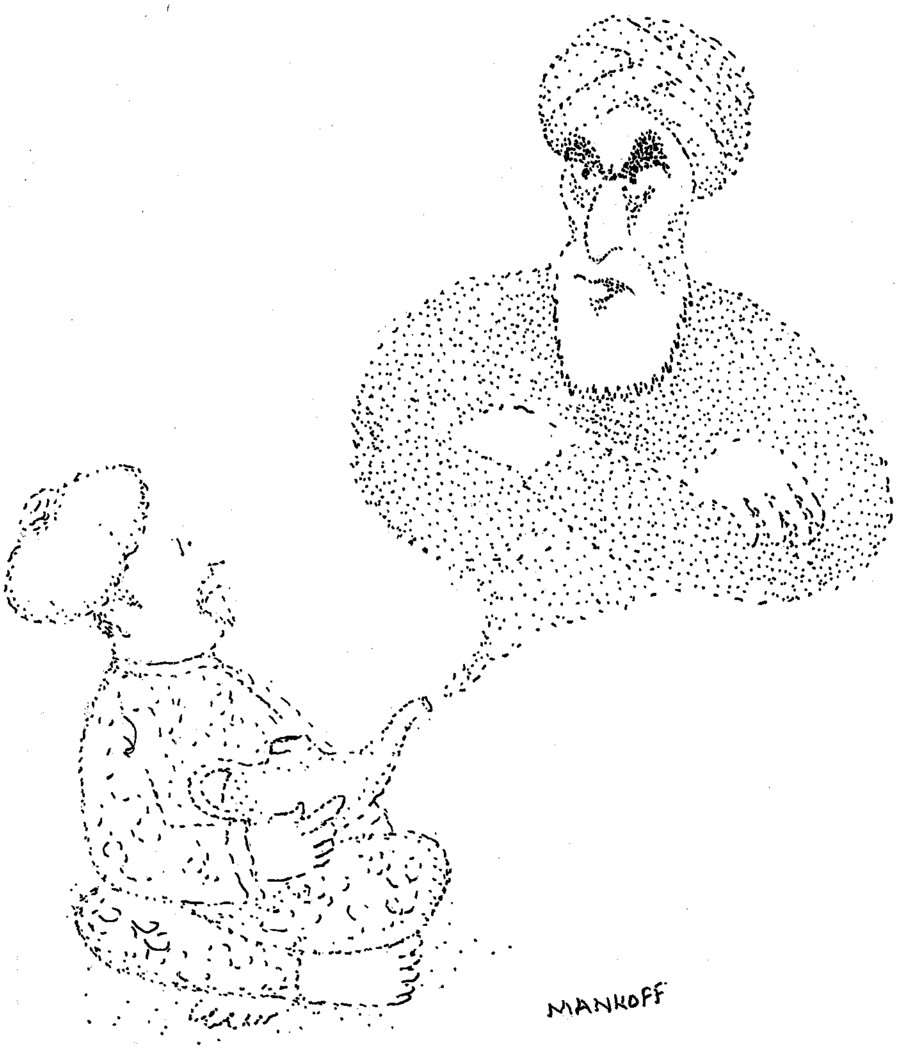
James Merrill's "Mirabell: Books of Number" (Atheneum; $10.95), which has won the National Book Award, is the middle volume of a trilogy composed with the aid of a Ouija board. The Ouija board is a symbol system that offers potentially unlimited combinations of letters and numbers, affirmations and denials; it can stand, we might say, for language itself. The first installment of Merrill's trilogy, "The Book of Ephraim" (printed in "Divine Comedies," in 1976), exhausted the letters of the board; it was composed in twenty-six sections, labelled "A" through "Z." The current volume uses up the numbers of the board, in ten books, going from zero to nine. The final volume, to be called "Scripts for the Pageant," is left with "Yes," "No," and the ampersand. The Ouija board is a shared system, used by the dead and the living, in which tradition, in the person of the dead, meets an individual talent—or, in this case, the joint talents of the poet and his friend David Jackson. Together, as JM and DJ, in their house at Stonington, Connecticut, where the action of "Mirabell" occurs, they transcribe the rapid pointings of a willowware cup that they use instead of a planchette. The messages from "the other side," all in the uppercase of the board, are edited by Merrill—compressed, made intelligible, made into poetry. Board messages are interspersed with commentary and colloquy by the poet. The pages are typographically unnerving, as blocks of otherworldly uppercase—looking, as a friend remarked, like a computer printout—alternate with blocks of mortal lowercase. The uppercase, in the board's peculiar spelling—"before" becomes "B4," "you" becomes "U"—is sometimes a ten-syllable line (when dead people talk), sometimes a fourteen-syllable line (when the spirits, who enact "a fall from metrical grace," take over). Human talk is decasyllabic, in "this rough/ Pentameter, our virtual birthright." From time to time, a lyric form, like a strain of music, appears. The talk of the dead and of the living alike tends to rhyme in couplets and quatrains, but that of the spirits does not rhyme. The spirits, who in "Mirabell" are represented chiefly by one among them bearing the number 741, seem to be in part what Milton would have called the fallen angels, and are first conceived of as black batlike creatures. At the center of the third book, 741 metamorphoses into a peacock, and he is later given the name Mirabell, after the "strut and plumage" of Congreve's hero. Mirabell, "a paragon of courtly gentleness," here replaces the earlier Ephraim as familiar spirit. Ephraim was chatty, conversational; he was comfortable in iambic pentameter, since he was human—"A Greek Jew/ Born AD 8 at XANTHOS . . ./ a favorite of TIBERIUS . . . Died AD 36 on CAPRI throttled/ By the imperial guard for having LOVED/ THE MONSTER'S NEPHEW (sic) CALIGULA." However, Ephraim spoke rather rarely, and the poem was narrated mostly by Merrill. Mirabell, on the other hand, speaks in ungainly syllabics, and the poet's interpolated lines serve as connective tissue between Mirabell's speeches and the speeches of the dead. The dead are, principally, Wystan Auden and Maria Mitsotáki, a childless Greek friend of Merrill's, whom he celebrated in a lyric, "Words for Maria" (1966).

"Mirabell" is a poem about the dead in part because it is a poem of the single life and childlessness; since there is no question of posterity, life is composed of oneself and one's friends, the dead as much as the living. The four bound together round the Ouija board—JM, DJ, Wystan, Maria—are chosen because of their childlessness. To Auden's question "Why the four of us?" Mirabell answers, "KEEP IN MIND THE CHILDLESSNESS WE SHARE THIS TURNS US/ OUTWARD TO THE LESSONS & THE MYSTERIES." The scale of the poem is both domestic and cosmic. The domestic life includes day-by-day details of life in Greece and in Stonington, the visits of friends, the deaths of parents, an operation. The cosmic life, presided over in Manichaean fashion by two gods—Chaos, the god of feeling, and an inexorable God B (for "biology")—is evolutionary, hierarchical, mythological, and intermittently purposive. God B's successive projects have included Atlantis, the centaurs, and Eden; he "is not only history but earth itself." The



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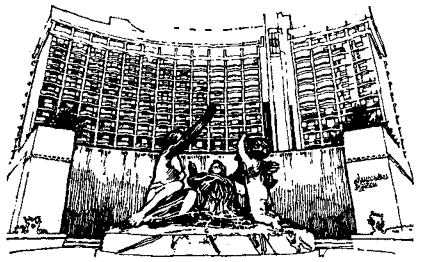

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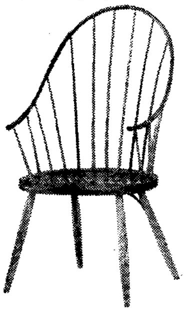

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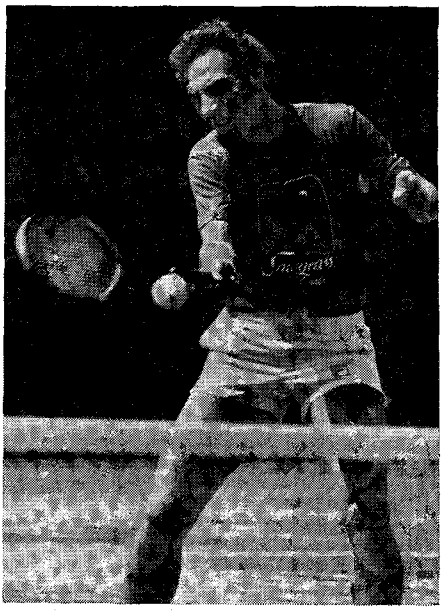
literary tradition within which the poem falls includes all works written by men to whom the angels speak outright: Dante, the four Apostles, Buddha, Muhammad, and, in later days, Milton, Blake, Victor Hugo, and Yeats. Merrill himself diffidently admits to doubts about "all this/ Warmed-up Milton, Dante, Genesis," fearing "Allegory, in whose gloom the whole/ Horror of Popthink fastens on the soul;" he worries about being "cast/ Into this paper Hell out of Doré/ Or Disney." On the other hand, the quintet of Merrill, Jackson, Auden, Maria Mitsotáki, and Mirabell is said to be an example of the "vital groupings of five," who do "V work"—the work of mind and heart (primarily poetry and music)—encouraged, according to Mirabell, by loves that do not envisage the production of bodies:

> LOVE OF ONE MAN FOR ANOTHER OR
> LOVE BETWEEN WOMEN
> IS A NEW DEVELOPMENT OF THE
> PAST 4000 YEARS
> ENCOURAGING SUCH MIND VALUES
> AS PRODUCE THE BLOSSOMS
> OF POETRY & MUSIC, THOSE 2 PRINCIPAL LIGHTS OF
> GOD BIOLOGY. LESSER ARTS NEEDED
> NO EXEGETES:
> ARCHITECTURE SCULPTURE THE
> MOSAICS & PAINTINGS THAT
> FLOWERD IN GREECE & PERSIA
> CELEBRATED THE BODY.
> POETRY MUSIC SONG INDWELL &
> CELEBRATE THE MIND . . .
> HEART IF U WILL

Few painters or sculptors enter this life of the mind, Mirabell adds, since they, "LIKE ALL SO-CALLD NORMAL LOVERS," exist for no purpose other than to produce bodies. This Platonic myth is mocked by Mirabell's listeners: "Come now, admit that certain very great/ Poets and musicians have been straight." But the claim, however whimsical, has been made, and the whole of Merrill's trilogy can be seen as a substitution of the virtues of mind and heart—culminating in music and poetry—for the civic and familial and martial virtues usually espoused by the epic.

We might hesitate to think of "Mirabell" in epic terms, since it learns at least as much from Pope and Byron as from Dante. But in its encyclopedic instructions about the history of the cosmos, and its cast of characters from Olympus (if we may so locate the spirits) and from Hades as well as from earth, its traits are epic ones. For all its rueful tone as it fears and doubts its own matter and method, it goes irrepressibly along, piecing together shards of myth from all cultures: Akhnaton rubs shoulders with Muhammad and centaurs, while Mother



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Nature, in conjunction with the Sultan God B, presides over all. The hymn to nature in the seventh book articulates the ebb and flow of loyalty—now to mind, now to Nature—implicit in the whole poem. Fearful of the power of the senses, Merrill, like some modern metaphysical, asks what rational instruments they have robbed him of—"What have you done with/ My books, my watch and compass, my slide-rule?"—but Nature answers with her own fascination of texture, whether in constellations or in bodies, "those infinite/ Spangled thinnesses whose weave gosling and cygnet/ Have learned already in the shell."

When Merrill contemplates what he has done in writing "Mirabell," he complains to Auden that the result is maddening:

It's all by someone else!
In your voice, Wystan, or in Mirabell's.
I want it mine, but cannot spare those twenty
Years in a cool dark place that *Ephraim* took
In order to be palatable wine.
This book by contrast, immature, supine,
Still kicks against its archetypal cradle.
. . . I'd set
My whole heart, after *Ephraim*, on returning
To private life, to my own words. Instead,
Here I go again, a vehicle
In this cosmic carpool. Mirabell once said
He taps my word banks. I'd be happier
If *I* were tapping them. Or thought I were.

Auden replies in a magisterial defense of convention, tradition, and fable. On convention:

THINK WHAT A MINOR
PART THE SELF PLAYS IN A WORK OF ART
COMPARED TO THOSE GREAT GIVENS
THE ROSEBRICK MANOR
ALL TOPIARY FORMS & METRICAL
MOAT ARIPPLE!

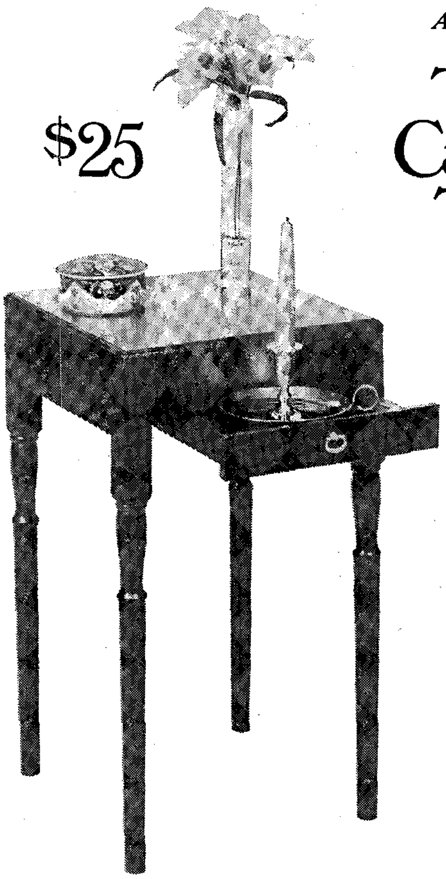
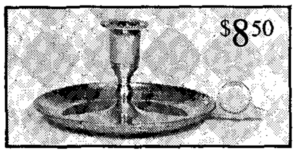
On tradition:

AS FOR THE FAMILY ITSELF MY DEAR
JUST GAPE UP AT THAT CORONETED FRIEZE:
SWEET WILLIAMS & FATE-FLAVORED EMILIES
THE DOUBTING THOMAS & THE DULCET ONE
(HARDY MY BOY WHO ELSE? & CAMPION).

On the superiority of fable to facts:

FACTS JM WERE ALL U KNEW TO WANT,
WRETCHED RICKETY RECALCITRANT
URCHINS THE FEW WHO LIVE GROW UP TO BE
IMPS OF THE ANTIMASQUE

In fable, "A TABLE/ IS SET & LAMPS LIT FOR THE FEASTING GODS." Auden concludes that, given time, facts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themselves take on the livery of fable and become material for art. The poem ends as Mirabell withdraws in favor of a stern-voiced archangel Michael, speaking in long, irregular lines: he will be the next instructor, an unfallen rather than a fallen one, as Merrill proceeds into the "Paradiso" of his "Divine Comedies."

"Ephraim" is, on the whole, a cheerful book, constructed around a mythology of reincarnation: most people live on, over and over, even if in someone else's body. In "Mirabell," Merrill and Jackson discover that their dead companions Auden and Maria will not be reincarnated but will dissolve into their elements, having first been stripped of their earthly connections. The end of the book celebrates "Maria's Himmelfahrt" and Auden's. Goodbyes are said, of a careful lightness:

> How
> We'll miss you! We'd imagined—I
> KNOW CIAO

JM had imagined a thousand and one nights of conversation with these indispensable voices. But the Ouija board meets the law of dissolution, and in the last episode Auden and Maria seem to have disappeared, leaving behind only a snapshot—"Young, windblown/ Maria with dark glasses and Gitane"—and a book "by Wystan/ Face up . . . all week/ Open to Miranda's villanelle." "Mirabell" is a book of long farewell to the parental figures of Auden and Maria, a book that holds on to the dead as long as possible. They are the people who call JM and DJ "MES ENFANTS" (Maria, known as "Maman") or "MY BOYS" (Auden). When these voices fall silent, there will be no one to whom the poet is a child. Though Merrill's mother is alive, she is deliberately left out of the trilogy, as "Ephraim" explains:

> All of which lights up, as scholarship
> Now and then does, a matter hitherto
> Overpainted—the absence from these
> pages
> Of my own mother. Because of course
> she's here
> Throughout, the breath drawn after
> every line,
> Essential to its making as to mine.

The deaths of David Jackson's parents preface the appearance of Mirabell. In the usual biological cycle, parents die after their children have become parents; the internalizing of the parental role, it is believed, enables the parents to be absorbed into the filial psyche. In the childless world of "Mirabell," the disappearance of parents, or parental friends, is the disappearance of the parental and therefore of the filial; JM and DJ can no longer be "boys" but must put on the mortality of the survivor. However much the sweetness of posthumous conversation with Auden and Maria may be prolonged—with analyses of their characters, examples of their wit, descriptions of their lives—the end of the exchange is envisaged from Maria's first warning, at the end of Book 1: "I HAVE MORE TO LOSE." In Merrill's myth, Maria will become a plant, not a human being; the radiation she endured as a treatment for cancer reduced her human soul to the vegetative level. Auden will be "stripped, reduced to essences, joined to infinity," like one of his beloved minerals:

> What must at length be borne
> Is that the sacred bonds are chemical.

The "seminar" of the participants round the Ouija board is itself such a "stripping process," since Mirabell, Wystan, and Maria will gradually fade away. Merrill's work in creating the trilogy is a comparable "stripping":

> Art—
> The tale that all but shapes itself—
> survives
> By feeding on its personages' lives.
> The stripping process, sort of. What to
> say?
> Our lives led *to* this. It's the price we
> pay.

If the artist needs new resources in middle age, it is not because the old ones are exhausted. On the contrary, the old ones, accumulating exponentially, seem to forbid the acquisition of the new. At some point, the writer begins his replay in slow motion of the eclectic litter and learning that crowd his mind: unburdening himself, he discharges, in an art relatively random by contrast to that of his earlier years, portions of everything he knows. So the board throws up bits and pieces of Merrill's reading (as "A Vision" threw up Yeats's, as "History" threw up Lowell's), and one of the difficulties with the trilogy is that no one of us duplicates Merrill's reading bank, any more than we duplicate Blake's or Milton's. The jumble that is any fifty-year-old memory poses for a reader the problem of other minds; the encyclopedic modern poem, from the "Cantos" on, presses the question almost intolerably.

Though the allusive density of "Mirabell" makes the poem at first difficult, the test of such a poem is not in the first reading (though if there is not enough pleasure in that the reader is lost for good) but in the reading that takes place once the scheme, the family relations, and the life histories in ques-

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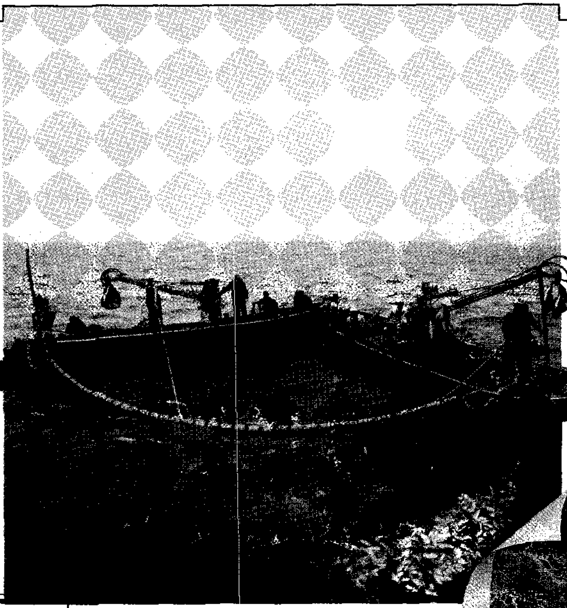

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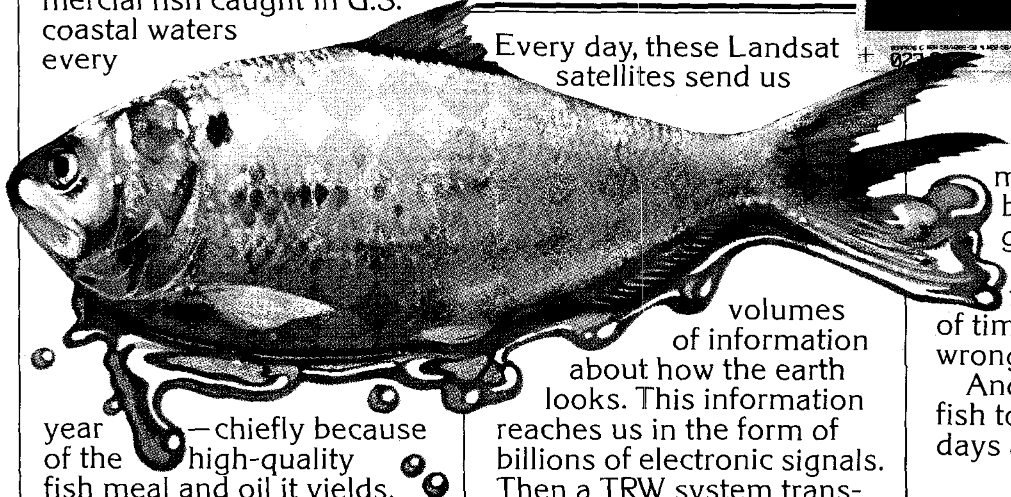

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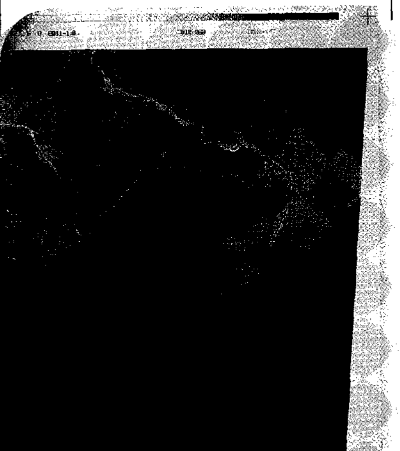

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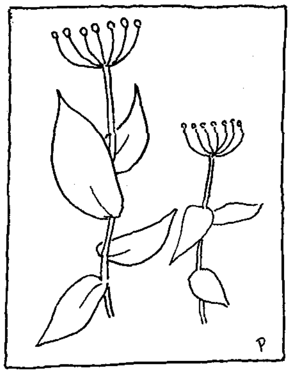
tion have become natural and familiar. In this poem, Merrill is enterprisingly (with some incidental wreckage) enlarging his theatre of operations. He avoids for lines on end the effortless jewelled effects for which he has been known, and he has turned aside from lyrics of the personal life to narrative, to mythological and metaphysical "explanations" of a discursive order ruled not by "feeling" or by "beauty" but by "truth." He is writing in voices other than his own. These undertakings are not wholly new: Merrill said in the early sixties, "If I am host at last/ It is of little more than my own past./ May others be at home in it." But the past of the earlier volumes was on the whole a selective one, careful of its references, arranged in exquisite forms, and restricted to crises of feeling. Two poems in "Nights and Days" (1966) appear to anticipate the trilogy. In a sequence of reflections on love called "The Thousand and Second Night," "the rough pentameter/ Quatrains give way, you will observe, to three/ Interpolations, prose as well as verse," reflecting on "mind, body, and soul (or memory)." The second instance is the inquiry into the nature of Eros in a long sequence called "From the Cupola." The poet adapts the myth of Eros and Psyche, and is himself both Psyche's poet (like Keats) and Psyche herself, receiving letters from the unknown Eros. Two caricatured evil sisters mock Psyche's claim to an invisible lover, but Psyche's real anxiety derives not from their realist cynicism but, rather, from her own distrust of love's distorting idealism. She is consoled by her poet in Audenesque cadences:



Psyche, hush. This is me, James.
   Writing lest he think
Of the reasons why he writes—
Boredom, fear, mixed vanities and
   shames;
      Also love.
From my phosphorescent ink
Trickle faint unworldly lights

By the end of "Mirabell," the faint unworldly lights have brightened into the radiance of enlightenment. But in his pursuit of truth Merrill has by no means forgotten his earlier homage to the senses. The daily life described in "Mirabell," which offers itself as one realized version of human existence, is attentive to the senses, to friendship, to domesticity, to art—all the elements found in Merrill's lyrics—as well as to the dead, for whom the poet has had to invent his trilogy. A continuity between the aesthetic and the sensual is at the heart of Merrill's work, from the earliest lyrics on—as if it were inconceivable that a love of textures, shapes, lines, light, and color should not also be a love of faces and bodies, even if "one falls back, soiled, blurred." Merrill's primary intuition is that of the absolute ravishment of the senses. As they combine and mingle, the senses create in the order of flesh interrelations and reinforcings that are like the elements of an art work. Yet Merrill's interest in the translation of the data of the senses into the nonpictorial forms of verse and music poses hazards. It is certain that language cannot imitate reality in any easily describable way. (The pitfalls of testifying in verse to the more sensuous of the world's pleasures are clearest in early Keats and Hopkins.) Language is always in allegorical relation to perception and sensation. In arguing that the sensual and the spiritual are indivisible, Merrill places his trust in the affections as a middle term. Faithlessness and infidelities are acts not of the flesh but of the spirit, and they occur when affection doubts or betrays its own powers. The certain loss of all "sacred bonds" underlies Merrill's verse. But as disbelief and death depopulate his real and imagined worlds, Merrill compensates by a poetry of exuberant mythology and a symposium of incarnate and discarnate voices. The eclectic banquet of youth is replaced in middle age by a Proustian feast of memory. In the fiction of "Mirabell," the blessings of conversation replace the blessings of sensuality. The audible conversation of tongues—life's addendum to the sensual conversation of bodies—gives way to the inaudible ghostly converse of the dead and the disembodied, as language, letter by letter, assembles itself through the Ouija board. As narrator of and Prospero to the whole pageant, Merrill, though fictionally the child of the "father of forms and matter-of-fact mother" on "the other side," is the adult progenitor of all that happens. The providential and parental figures of Mirabell, Auden, and Maria are only the creatures of his creation.

We might ask whether Merrill's

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case, at least in the trilogy, is too special to be susceptible of translation into our own terms. Does this flood of transcriptions from another world, this massive treatise on "science" and "history," imply anything for us? Merrill's implicit protest against the censorship of feeling by our relentless ironic intellectualizing of life (he speaks here for all reflective people) takes the form of a defiant mythology—though, in a charming revenge exacted by the time we live in, the mythology must couch itself in "scientific" terms. The mysterious instructors told Merrill to write "Poems of Science." He went home and waited but nothing happened, since his "word bank" was unfurnished with material. He resorted to popular science and to remembered childhood myths, inventing macrocosmic and subatomic perspectives from which nothing can be hidden from the enlightened eye. Merrill's mythology attempts to ask what work we can find for that part of the mind hitherto occupied in inventing religious systems. Unlike Lowell, who considered the really interesting people in history to be the emperors, the kings, and the politicians, Merrill thinks that the most attractive souls are those who thought up Edens and afterlifes, saints and satyrs. It may be surprising that Merrill, a poet of infinite finish, should come down so decisively in favor of large mythological outlines and of expository theology. But the epic poetic of the trilogy demands the large, and even the prosaic. Whereas the lyric is discontinuous, and rejects the narrativity that (however much it may be submerged) links the successive events of drama and fiction, the epic goes beyond narrativity to an encyclopedic account of all things in heaven and earth. The instructors promise to return Merrill to his "chronicles of love and loss" after the trilogy is done, but he will not be the same poet who set down the first lines of "The Book of Ephraim;" the stretching and straining of this large effort cannot be forgotten in a contraction to lyric shapes.

The lessons of "Mirabell" are all the unpopular ones of middle age. Most people, the poem tells us, are unevolved, and remain in an animal unawareness, in which they grow, couple, reproduce themselves, and die. Some souls evolve beyond this—into thought, vision, and art. They are the souls "cloned" in the "Research Lab" of the spirits and sent into the world to do the "V work" of civilization—creating religions, symphonies, temples, cultures, poems. There is no permanent culture; ours is one of successive attempts by God B to

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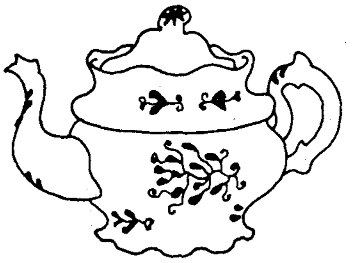

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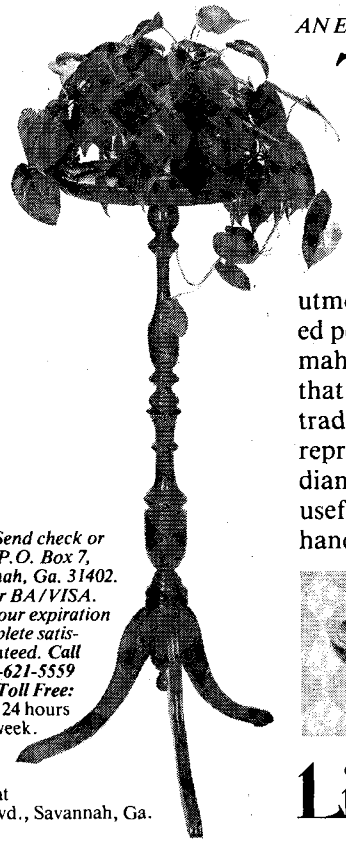
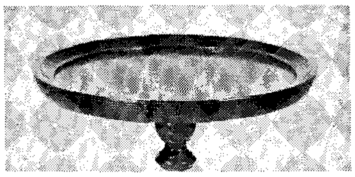
order chaos. The achievements of mind always seem to surpass their material origins; hence the myth of inspiring Muses, mysterious instructors, visions, and oracles. The honey of generation is an opiate; the childless have freer access to the spiritual life. Everyone dies. The conversation of friends is precious. As parents and friends die, we dwell more and more on the dead. Our minds become a repository of all we have read, learned, been brought up on. We begin to think in larger terms—about history, about the survival of the planet, about genius. But it is not for these or other worthy observations in their bald sense that we prize "Mirabell." It is, rather, for the intimate and solid circumstantiality in which those truths are based. We know the death of parents not propositionally but circumstantially, in the long, particular narration of the deaths of David Jackson's parents in "stupor, fear, incontinence," and their burial in a "raw trench." We know the loss of friends as Merrill accustoms us, through a hundred and seventy pages, to the tender and solicitous raillery of Auden and Maria, and then, once we have come to look forward to hearing them indefinitely, strikes the knell of their disappearance. We come to prize even the frailest creations of culture as Merrill's myths link the oldest constructions, like Atlantis and Eden, named rather than evoked, to the creation, metamorphosis, and humanizing of the bat-peacock Mirabell. First an inhuman other, Mirabell becomes, through "this world of courtesy"—the board of communication—someone who can love ("I HAVE COME TO LOVE U") and is self-conscious and aesthetically reflective. In his becoming we see the coming-to-be of every conscious creature, through language and love:

B4 OUR MEETINGS I WAS NOTHING
  NO TIME PASSD BUT NOW
YR TOUCH LIKE A LAMP HAS SHOWN
  ME TO MYSELF & I AM
ME: 741! I HAVE ENTERD A GREAT
  WORLD I AM FILLD
WITH IS IT MANNERS?

There are stretches of flats in the exposition of the mythology, yet its density merely shares with all systems—from Leviticus to the "Book of Mormon" and Melville's cetology—a sheer willingness to bore. The visionary mind has its own pedantries. Just as complicated poets, like Milton, have to learn to be simple, so Merrill, natively compact, has here decided to learn a discursive plainness.

Before the concluding speech of the archangel Michael, who announces the





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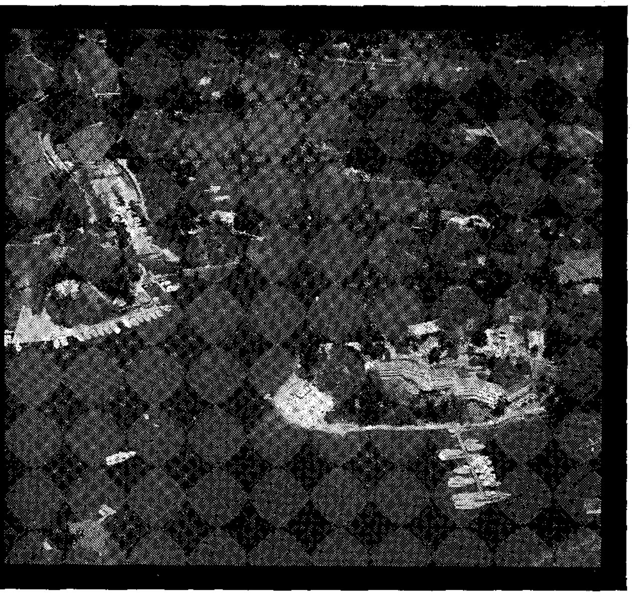

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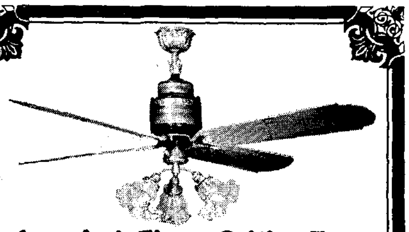

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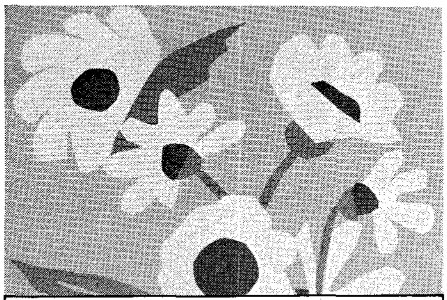

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next act of the comedy, Merrill speaks in his own voice of the world's diversity, as he glances out to numberless brilliancies of light over the water:

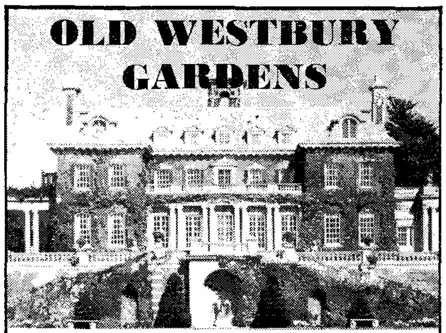
> The message hardly needs decoding, so
> Sheer the text, so innocent and fleet
> These overlapping pandemonia:
> Birdlife, leafplay, rockface, waterglow
> *Lending us their being, till the given*
> Moment comes to render what we owe.

Merrill has offered a self-definition through metaphor in the course of the poem: his metal is silver (Auden's is platinum), his element air, his mineral crystal, his color "cold lavender." In themselves, these specifications are definitive. By middle age, one knows what one is. If Merrill reminds us sometimes of Ariel, he is yet an Ariel making a deliberate gesture toward an enlarging of style in his refusal to be exclusively beautiful. By its admission of the learning, conversation, and random use of language which underlie the crystallizations of lyric, Merrill's poem pays homage to the riches of unordered literary experience:

> MANS TERMITE PALACE BEEHIVE
> ANTHILL PYRAMID JM
> IS LANGUAGE USE IT STIR THE
> THINKERS & DETER THE REST.

Language "of such a depth, shimmer and force" is the "life raft" that carries the poet over the flood of sensation. "Mirabell" is more a diary, in fact, than a planned "system": each section encompasses whatever rises to the surface at a given moment of composition. The mind whose word banks and image banks are here tapped is not in any way a typical one. It is preternaturally knowing and eclectically read; it strikes attitudes; it is fond but acutely critical; it likes puns perhaps more than it should; its relativism is both despairing and elated. It never lacks fit language: silky and astringent by turns; lustrous and decorative one moment, attenuated and scholastically drab the next; candid or esoteric as its author decides.

What is in the American mind these days—the detritus of past belief, a hodgepodge of Western science and culture, a firm belief in the worth of the private self and in the holiness of the heart's affections, a sense of time and space beyond the immediate—is here displayed for judgment. Somewhat less general in reference, perhaps, is Merrill's examination of what, as a personal aim, can replace self-reproduction in childbearing. Once the biological purpose of life is even theoretically put aside as a justification of living, we must (if theological justifica-



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tions are abandoned) advocate something like Merrill's civilizing "V work." The Arnoldian doctrine of the "saving remnant" seems in this poem to have a new defender; but Merrill dwells, as Arnold does not, on the parallel necessity of private affection. Love and civilization here go hand in hand, the work of art and science refining life in public as the bonds of affection refine life in private. "Mirabell" is Merrill's hymn to the spiritual evolution that seems possible, if precarious, now that biological evolution has invented man; its dark undersong is Hiroshima in the realm of science and subhuman stupidity in the realm of the private life.

What Merrill once said of Eugenio Montale—that his emotional refinement is "surprisingly permeable by quite ordinary objects: ladles, hens, pianos, half-read letters"—is true of Merrill himself. The claim of ordinary objects and ordinary events on lyric is a mark of the democratic declaration, in every modern poet of quality from the priestlike Eliot down through the alchemizing Merrill, that the things of the world can lend a myth (as Crane said of the Brooklyn Bridge) to God. The tendency of modern American lyric poets to reclaim whole tracts of language and experience ceded in the nineteenth century to novels or nonfictional prose continues in Merrill. It is this tendency that has caused us to outstrip our parent stock in England. If to play so free with tradition one poet needs the Ouija board, and another, like Ginsberg, needs visions, and another, like Eliot, needs Buddhism, those who are not poets can only conclude that the work of creation proceeds by its own inscrutable means.

—HELEN VENDLER

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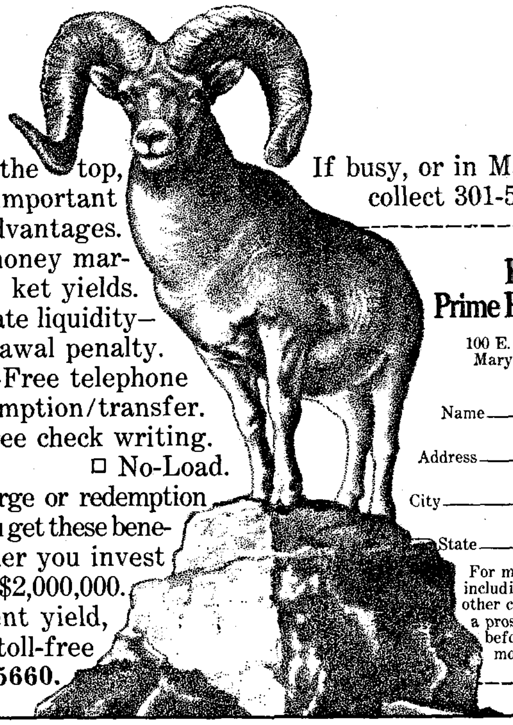

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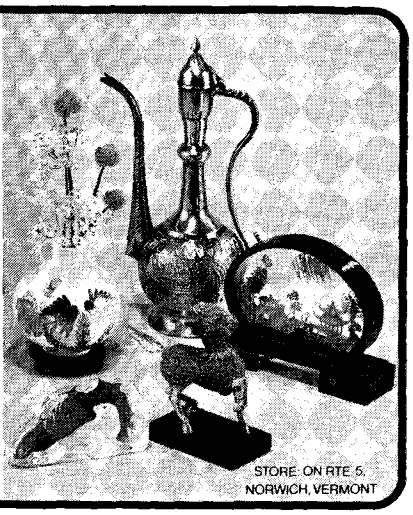

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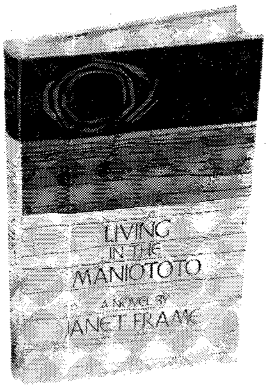

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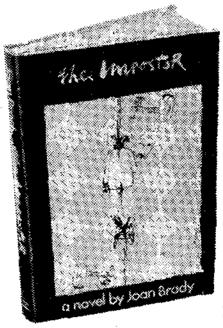

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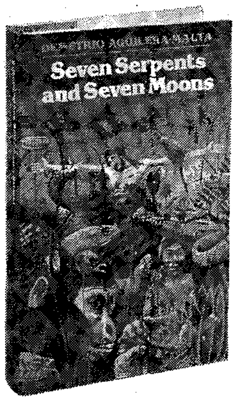
woman who plays the part of a prisoner's fiancée as a political subterfuge—and her destiny is never doubted. After her father dies in prison, when Rosa is in her mid-twenties, her secret ambivalence becomes unbearable, and she obtains a passport and leaves South Africa, resolved to discover if there is any other way she can live. Her quest begins in the South of France, where she spends a summer, but it is when she finds herself among exiled activists in London that the answer comes to her. A riveting history of South Africa and a penetrating portrait of a courageous and lonely woman. Alternating between first- and third-person narratives, Nadine Gordimer renders the range of images—from the edgy outbursts of underground gatherings in Johannesburg to the sunny tableaux of picnics and parties along the Mediterranean—that frame and direct the course Rosa Burger will follow.

GENERAL

A NOBLE TREASON: THE REVOLT OF THE MUNICH STUDENTS AGAINST HITLER, by Richard Hanser (Putnam; $12.50). In 1943, the Germans guillotined a university professor, Kurt Huber, and five young people: a brother and sister, Hans and Sophie Scholl; Christoph Probst; Alexander Schmorell; and Willi Graf—all the members the Gestapo could find of a resistance group that had written and distributed anti-Nazi leaflets. What these people had in common was a love of music, a profound Christian belief, and high intelligence. They had no money, no power, and no arms, yet their ingenuity contrived a surprisingly wide distribution of their appeals to Germans to overthrow Hitler and his regime. The author has done a wonderful job of reconstructing the personalities of these sane, brave, and incorruptible people so that their charm as well as their virtue comes through, and he has made equally vivid the nightmare quality of life in Nazi Germany for German Aryans.

ONE MAN, ONE VOICE, by Charles Morgan, Jr. (Holt, Rinehart & Winston; $12.95). The lively, indignant memoirs of a lawyer who worked for the American Civil Liberties Union from 1964 to 1976 in Atlanta and Washington, taking legal action in such matters as civil rights, Vietnam protest, and Watergate. Like many other dragon slayers, Morgan describes the beasts in



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great detail, and his book is an encyclopedia of rascality, from which a reader may learn how to steal elections, addle juries, and make money in politics. Morgan frequently assails "liberals" for their gentility and timidity, yet between bouts of righteous indignation he displays a sense of humor and tells us a lot about any number of political celebrities and a couple of nonpolitical ones, such as Muhammad Ali, whose appeal to be classified as a conscientious objector Morgan won.

Snakes & Ladders, by Dirk Bogarde (Holt, Rinehart & Winston; $12.95). If Dirk Bogarde was, for a while, a star, he did not twinkle so much as flicker, having been typecast early on by the failing British film industry and stranded, for the better part of his career, in a string of forgettable swashbuckling and "cloth-cap and raincoat" roles. It was not until 1969, when he was almost fifty years old, that Luchino Visconti cast him in his most memorable role: von Aschenbach in "Death in Venice." Mr. Bogarde's social and theatrical ups and downs, more numerous and less alpine than those of his more celebrated friends (including Noël Coward, Judy Garland, Rex Harrison, and Elizabeth Taylor), are not particularly thrilling, but his accounts of private views and conversations are exquisite, and his story is worth reading for the pleasure of these passages alone.

Wild Habitats, by Aleta Karstad (Scribners; $12.95). Miss Karstad is a multi-gifted Canadian field naturalist, and this elegant little book is a depiction—an observation in drawings and text—of twenty-five natural habitats, mostly in Canada but generally applicable to the United States as well, that she has visited and patiently studied: the ocean beach, an eastern mixed forest and cleared land, a railroad embankment, a northern lake, a burn, a bog, a prairie wheat farm, a city, a sagebrush desert, a stretch of tundra, a mountain timberline, a western rain forest. She is a fine descriptive writer ("Lifting a flat stone may expose smooth, velvety beetle grubs, sleeping, curled like fat brown cats, on their sides") and a precise pictorial artist, and her drawings (some in color) of raccoon tracks, a dead bumblebee, a maple leaf, a fly larva, a poplar bud, grouse droppings, a clamshell, the jawbone of a hare are as vivid as her writing. This is a choice book—part celebra-

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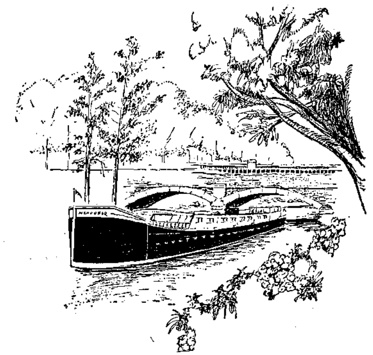

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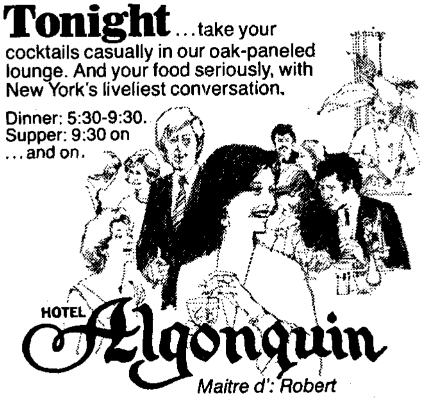

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tion, part adventure, part scientific guide.

MYSTERY AND CRIME

GOLD BY GEMINI, by Jonathan Gash (Harper & Row; $8.95). Lovejoy, of Lovejoy Antiques, Inc. (and of the most enjoyable earlier "The Judas Pair"), gets complicated and highly cryptic wind of a treasure trove of early Roman coins somewhere on the Isle of Man, but, as it quickly and brutally turns out, there are other, less savory collectors involved in the search. Mr. Gash, as before, is good entertainment, and, also as before, there is the added pleasure of Lovejoy's asides on his trade: "Decorative industrial ironwork will be the next most sought-after," "Never, *ever* put mother-of-pearl under a strong light or on a sunny windowsill," and, on telling genuine antique manuscript letters and diaries from forgeries, "Correct grammar's a must . . . You can allow for spelling mistakes by the milliard, but grammar has to be impeccable."

PANGOLIN, by Peter Driscoll (Lippincott; $9.95). Mr. Driscoll's new and thoroughly enjoyable thriller is set in Hong Kong. An out-of-work British newspaperman conceives a plan to kidnap a valuable resident American diplomat and C.I.A. executive (code name Pangolin) and enlists three differently useful confederates: a failing British businessman with an oceangoing junk, an out-of-work Chinese movie stunt man, and an idle American muscleman. The plan is seemingly foolproof, and is carried off successfully in its first phase, but then human error begins to creep in. Disaster follows disaster, binding us to Mr. Driscoll's bidding every step of the way.

•

GOREN ON BRIDGE

QUESTION: Two years ago I moved in with my boyfriend. Now he says he has become a Christian and he made me move back to my parents a month ago. Do you think if I became a Christian maybe he would marry me? I think I love him very much.—*Jacksonville (Fla.) Journal.*

All right, Goren, let's hear it!

•

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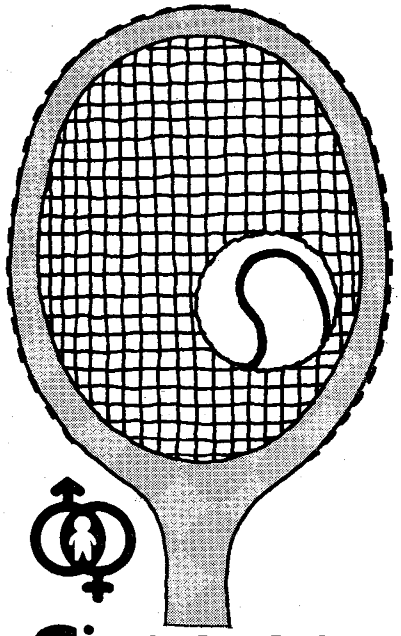

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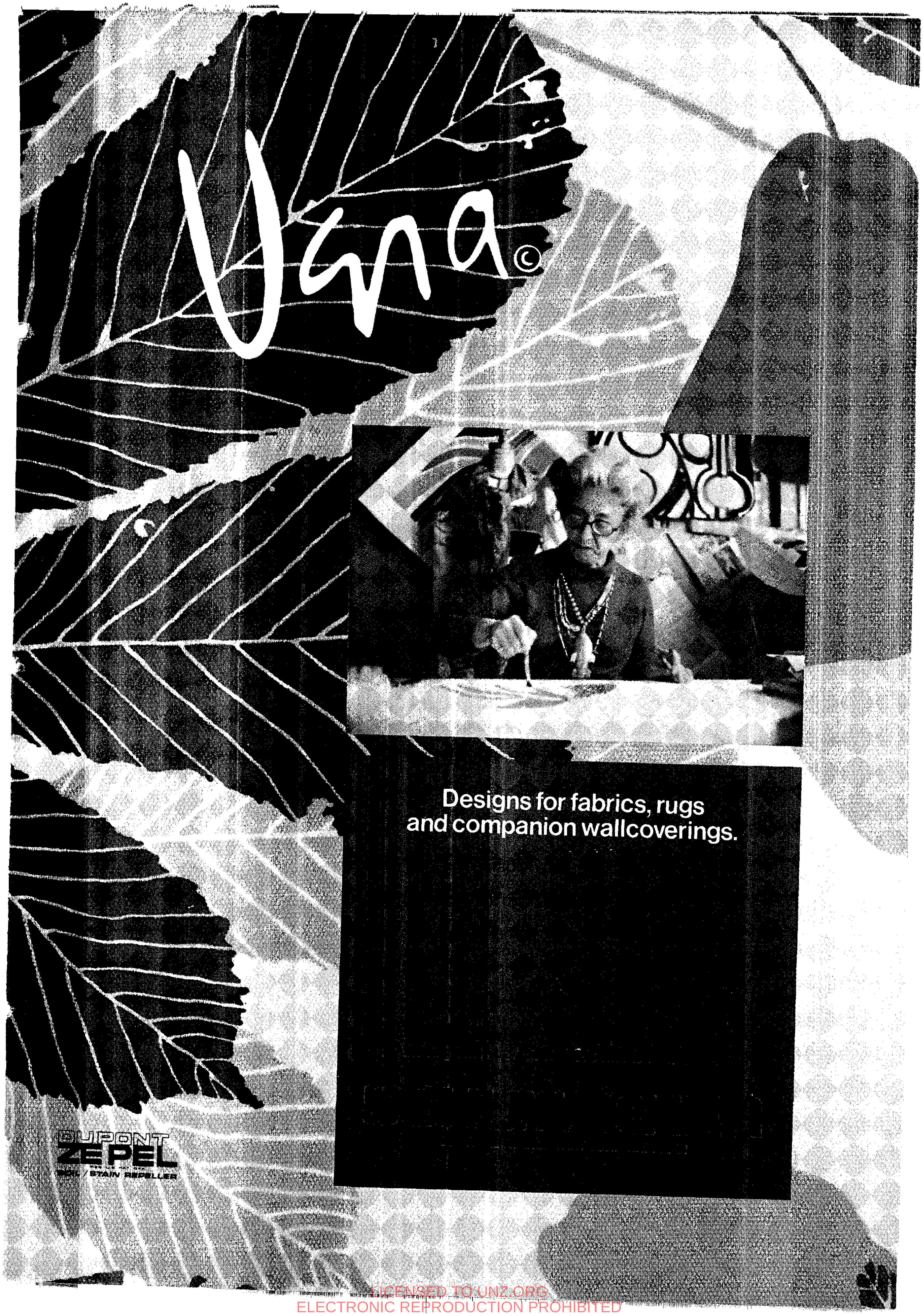
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